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General Vacancies

Director of Literature

The Director of Literature is responsible for the development and implementation of the Arts Council's policy for Literature. The position requires knowledge of a wide range of literary activity, managerial ability and skill in handling individuals and committees. The Department's work includes issues concerned with education and the literature of non-western cultures. The appointment is initially for a period of 5 years with the possibility of an extension at the end of that time. Salary will vary on a scale from £15,783-£20,930 per annum, and the Council has a non-contributory pension scheme.

For a job description and application form please contact the Personnel Department, 105 Piccadilly, London W1V 0AU. Tel: 01-629 9455 Ext. 286. Closing date for receipt of applications: 12th December 1988.

The Arts Council welcomes applications from all sections of the Community regardless of race, colour, ethnic or national origins, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, disability or religious beliefs.

Fellowships

University of Cambridge

Faculty of English

Applications are invited for the following Visiting Fellowships for the academic year 1989-90:

JUDITH E. WILSON VISITING FELLOWSHIPS

The Visiting Fellow shall either have had substantial experience in dramatic production, or playwright, director, actor, or writer in theatre, opera, film, radio, or television, or shall be a practicing writer in any other literary field. The holder of the Visiting Fellowship will normally be for one of two University terms.

JUNIOR JUDITH E. WILSON VISITING FELLOWSHIP

Applicants should normally be under the age of 35. For 1989-90, applications are invited from people with literary or creative experience in any field other than drama. The terms of the Junior Visiting Fellowship will be for two University terms.

Both Visiting Fellows will be expected to reside in Cambridge during the University months and to work with members of the Faculty.

Further information may be obtained from Miss R.M. Harrison, Secretary, Judith E. Wilson Fund, Faculty of English, 100 West Road, Cambridge, CB3 9DP, to whom applications, containing a curriculum vitae, should be sent by 3 January 1989. Applicants should clearly state whether they wish to be considered for both posts or for only one of them. Any correspondence should be clearly marked with the post it refers to.

Librarians

St Paul's School ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

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One of Glyn Williams's drawings, "Resting Head", inspired by Velázquez's "Rokeby Venus". It is on show, together with other drawings and a series of sculptures inspired by the same source, in his exhibition at the Bernard Jacobson Gallery, 2a Cork St, London W1, which will continue until January 3.

A genius of the future

John Golding

JOHN REWALD
Cézanne
288pp. Thames and Hudson. £40.
0 500 09171 4

The issue of John Rewald's biography of Cézanne, first published some fifty years ago and long out of print, has about it an air of celebration. Large but not cumbersome in format, it has been impeccably produced. It is lavishly illustrated and the colour plates are of outstandingly good quality; a large number of the works shown have never been reproduced before, and there is much that is new in the way of comparative material - old photographs, contemporary documents and so forth. The illustrations have been arranged to illuminate the narrative of the text and are grouped according to subject-matter in such a way that the artist's development speaks for itself. There are the early portrait studies of family and friends, vigorous, clumsy, but always psychologically truthful, giving way to monolithic studies of sitters seen as still life. Then come the wild, erotic bacchanals and bathing scenes which must have helped to convince many of Cézanne's youthful associates of his genius because of their disturbingly crude intensity, but which also dismayed and repelled critics and the arbiters of the official salon: their rawness makes them look highly relevant to some of the products of neo-Expressionism.

The contacts with Impressionism turned Cézanne into a true landscapist, and subsequently, through landscape, to the sublimation of the nude bathers as they flow into the landscape backgrounds and the backgrounds of the late 1870s affirms that it was perhaps in this genre that the full force of his genius made itself unequivocally felt for the first time. Throughout the 1880s the technique becomes increasingly assured and personal: even the most heavily worked canvases are informed by a quality of idiosyncrasy and transparency; the pictorial substructures have become rock-like, impregnable. The late still lifes and landscapes become more and more animate; the draperies and the foliage become heavier and denser - they envelop and protect us. The contours of the beloved Mont Sainte-Victoire become softer, more breast-like. It is the story of radical but unruly gifts husbanded, but also of an artist transcending his limitations, turning them into

strengths.

This book began life as *Cézanne et Zola*, published in 1936. As Professor Rewald began to amass his unique knowledge of French art in the second half of the nineteenth century he understandably turned his attention increasingly to the painter; but it is still the relationship between the two men which, even more than the survey of Cézanne's development as an artist, provides the thread which holds the book together. It is a tale that has been often told, and its fascination is endless. There were the early halcyon days when, together with their friend Baille, they roamed the countryside around Aix, a Virgilian idyll described best by Zola in his article on Musset, who had replaced Victor Hugo as their idol. Afterwards there were the years of apprenticeship and poverty in Paris, which must have confirmed Zola in seeing himself as an artist of the industrial and capitalist age and Cézanne in realizing that the urban scene was not for him. Then came Zola's enormous overnight success with the publication of *L'Assommoir* in 1878, and, in the years before this, his defence of Manet and the Impressionists, a defence which he saw as a duty to the misunderstood and attacked (although he didn't understand or like their work all that much himself) and also perhaps as a challenge to his genius as a polemical journalist. As a youth he had believed in Cézanne's genius, in part at least because he sensed the uniqueness of his personality; and Cézanne must have helped him to coin the famous phrase, in his *Salon* of 1866, that "une oeuvre d'art est un coin de la création vu à travers d'un tempérament". But as he himself became increasingly celebrated so he came to see Cézanne's art as unresolved, his talent unrealized.

The two men loved each other and continued to do so, and Cézanne was always welcome in Zola's apartment and at the house at Médan. But as Zola became ever more of a public figure and celebrity, Cézanne became increasingly introverted, turning in not only upon himself but upon his art. The difficult aspects of Cézanne's character, his farouche, often violent outbursts, his increasing taciturnity, his innocent, even childlike expressions of humility and arrogance, these must have come to seem to his erstwhile mentor less romantic, less sympathetic, less revealing of the passionate personality in which he had once believed.

The final break came with the publication of Zola's *L'Oeuvre* in 1886. In it Cézanne appears

as Claude Lantier, the failed painter who eventually hangs himself in front of the canvas which he realizes he can never complete. (The references to Balzac's *Chef d'oeuvre inconnu*, a work much admired by Cézanne, are more or less overt.) Lantier is in fact a composite character; in his notes Zola writes of him as "un Manet, un Cézanne dramatisé, plus près de Cézanne", and contemporaries were aware of the fact that Zola put as much of himself into the character as into that of Lantier's writer friend Sandoz. Lantier had first put in an appearance in *Le Ventre de Paris* of 1873, and Cézanne had not minded; he was touchy, even paranoid, but he had a sense of the appropriateness of life being used as the raw material for art, and also a somewhat coarse sense of fun which probably allowed him to see the portrayal of himself as a joke. Now, however, he must have felt himself exposed, violated.

And then the character of Lantier is so unconvincing (Laurent, the painter in *Thérèse Raquin*, a much earlier Zola novel, is in many ways more credible as a portrait of Cézanne). The fact that he is confounded at certain moments with Manet (the first picture we witness Lantier painting is Manet's "Déjeuner sur l'herbe") must have been painful; Manet was to remain to the end of his life a controversial figure but he had painted individual masterpieces, recognizable landmarks in contemporary art, in a way that Cézanne had not. Claude is a failure as a character because Zola was really only interested in creating types, manifestations of hereditary and social conditions, and in so far as Claude is Cézanne, he had chosen the wrong prototype because as a character in fiction Cézanne was unportrayable. Manet could just conceivably have been turned into a type - the urbane, literate artist who is nevertheless a revolutionary *ungratifié*. Van Gogh would have been grist to Zola's mill, but he had come on the scene too late; there have been scores of painters who have shared his temperament though none, of course, his particular genius. Gauguin was not a type but turned himself in a sense into an archetype, certainly into a legend, though once again after Zola had lost much of his interest in the visual arts.

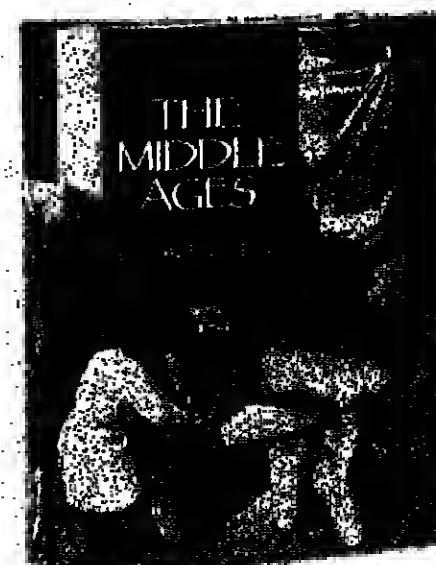
Zola's description of Cézanne as "un grand peintre avorté", which came in his last *Salon* piece of 1896, in which he also more or less savaged and turned his back on his old Impressionist friends and their legacy, has always been held against him. Very few commentators

trouble to point out that he led up to his remark by saying, "I had grown up virtually in the same cradle as Paul Cézanne; one is only now beginning to discover the touches of genius in this abortive great artist." Two years later he said to Joachim Gasquet, "I even begin better to understand his painting, which I have always liked but which for a long time I did not understand, or I thought it exaggerated, whereas actually it is unbelievably sincere and truthful." Zola's visual sense in artistic matters was unreliable (and his personal taste execrable); but he went on thinking and worrying about his old friend.

In one sense, however, the break had been complete and irrevocable. When he received his copy of *L'Oeuvre* Cézanne wrote Zola a short, dignified letter of thanks; it was characteristic of him that he should have refused to show his wounds. The two men never met again. When Cézanne heard of Zola's death in 1902, from his gardener, he shut himself into his studio for a day, inconsolable in his grief. Clearly the news brought back idyllic memories of their youth, into some region of experience where art becomes religion. In some respects the two friends had been each other's counterparts. In 1901 the friend of their youth Nuno Coste had written to Zola of Cézanne, "He is well and physically solid, but he has become timid and primitive and younger than ever." I suspect this was one of the most perceptive remarks ever to be made about the painter. Passionate, strong, bold and intelligent, he had nevertheless a corner of his personality that never matured in terms of human relationships or even, possibly, in terms of his intellectual development. His sudden rages, his fear of being unexpectedly touched, his innate sense of helplessness in the face of many aspects of life, these were coupled with his overriding sense of artistic superiority, which could nevertheless be instantly punctured, bruised, and then nursed back through feelings of respect but also of hatred for what he recognized to be the qualities and achievements of the art of his age. All these things speak for a certain personal immaturity; but what failed to flower in his life or even in his character, he put into his art, and there he kept it flourishing, growing, until his death.

The complexities and ironies of the Zola-

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Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 2RU, England

Cézanne story are infinite. If Cézanne had a child-like side to his nature, as an artist he was possibly the stranger of the two – not so much in terms of achievement as in terms of temperament. Zola, infinitely more worldly, was fearless in moral battle, and he believed that artists were responsible to society as much or even more than to themselves; but he was afraid of failure, both personal and public, just as he was terrified of death. Cézanne overcame his fear of the former and his subsequent contempt for recognition became one of his greatest strengths. Rewald suggests that one of Cézanne's reasons for religious conformity lay in fear of death, but I doubt if this was so. I believe that Cézanne thought that life, as opposed to art, was something of a bad joke that had to be accepted and that his religion was part of this acceptance. When his death occurred – he died quite quickly in 1906, after he was caught in a storm while working on the mill, was exposed for a few hours, was gut home, tried to work some more, collapsed and expired – he was in a sense striding off into the landscape of his own art, just as he strode off day after day to explore the landscape that had formed his vision.

Zola's death, on the other hand, was mysterious – perhaps just the kind of death he feared – and he may even have been murdered. *L'Œuvre*, which lost him his most intimate and closest friend, was also one of his most books, and certainly the least readable of the Rougemont series. He was a chronicler, a documenter and he wrote passionately out of moral indignation but not out of personal experience or love. And time was to show that Cézanne – “grand peintre avorté” – was in fact Zola's “genius of the future”, not in the social sense which Zola would have wished, but because more than any other single artist he became the father of subsequent modern art, and the only figure of his generation to be

accepted, so to speak, as an honorary twentieth-century painter.

The revisions in Rewald's text are not perhaps as extensive as the publisher's dust-jacket might suggest, but they are telling. There is new material about the years as an art student in Aix – about the dreariness of the course work at the Municipal Drawing School, but also about what there might have been around at the time to stimulate and sustain an aspiring young artist. There are new quotations from contemporary letters from friends and associates that touch upon Cézanne and help us to fill out our picture of him. Several passages enlarge upon Cézanne's relations with his father, who comes out of the account slightly more sympathetically than before, and who was, in Cézanne's own words, “a man of genius; he left me an income of twenty thousand francs”.

There is also a new (to me at least) and fascinating account of the circumstances surrounding Caillebotte's great request to the Luxembourg: its acceptance by the authorities did not have an easy passage and Cézanne, together with Pissarro, came out of it worst in terms of the percentage of works rejected. There is a new penultimate chapter on “The Last Motifs at Aix”, which, as a footnote makes clear, is basically a very slightly modified version of the essay Rewald contributed to the catalogue of the exhibition *Cézanne: The late works*, mounted at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in 1977 and subsequently seen at the Grand Palais in Paris. This is also, despite the dispassionate tone it adopts, the most moving chapter in the book because it deals with what Cézanne ultimately most loved. A sad epilogue deals with his will and with the way his wife and son behaved after his death: they dispersed not only the contents of the studio but also the not inconsiderable fortune left to him by his father – a fortune which



A detail from Cézanne's "Overture to Tannhäuser" (the artist's subjects are his sister Marie and his mother), taken from the book reviewed here.

enabled him to live his life as he wished and not as he might have had to. The last lines of the book, quoting Madame Cézanne's epitaph on her husband, are chilling. She cannot have had an easy time of it, but the bleakness of their communal life – admittedly intermittent – is brought home by her remark to Matisse: “You understand, Cézanne didn't know what he was doing. He didn't know how to finish his pictures. Renoir and Monet, they knew their craft as painters.”

Rewald's text reads as freshly and compulsively as ever, largely because of his original decision to let the contemporary documents and evidence speak for themselves. The analysis of the painting is sympathetic and serviceable rather than inspired, but again he has demonstrated his understanding of the art through his choice and arrangement of illustrations. The insights into the characters of Cézanne's friends such as Monet, Renoir and Guillaumin are surprisingly slight, although Pissarro as always shines forth – a rock of a man and artistically generous in a way few painters are. If subsequent writers and scholars – Meyer

Shapiro, Lawrence Gowing, Robert Raddiffe, Adrian Stokes and, more recently, Richard Shiff, to name but a few – have shown more insight into Cézanne's working methods and artistic aims, Rewald has identified with the artist and caught him whole in a way that no one else has.

Today, when so many of the most interesting and fruitful products of art-historical research have centred on the psychology of visual perception, have sought to embed art more firmly in a sociological matrix, or have employed new methodologies which are essentially linguistic, it is salutary to be reminded by a book such as this that art is just as much the product of character and courage, of the clash and cross-fertilization of personalities as of ideas, of the distillation and sublimation of what is most shadowy and savage in the human psyche as well as of that which is finest and best.

It was announced on November 20 that the 1986 £10,000 Mitchell Prize has been awarded to John Rewald's *Cézanne*.

An intensity of looking

Frances Spalding

BRUCE LAUGHTON
The Euston Road School: A study in objective painting
373pp. Scolar Press, £42.
01859674943

Intended as a constructive criticism of existing styles and dogmas, the Euston Road School began as a small, private venture, advertised solely by a modest leaflet which declared that emphasis would be placed on “training the observation” and not on any attempt to impose a style. What emerged was a vein of realistic painting, outstanding, among the clash and fury of much modern art, for its scrupulous understatement. Named after its address (314 Euston Road), the School opened in October 1937 and, owing to war, folded after only two years. If it left an impression in the public mind it was one of “murk and fog, dingy colours and inconclusive architecture, drabness and poverty”, as its associate, Graham Bell, observed; its title “flattering in its inference of descent from Camden town, reproachful with its associations of soot and drizzle”. Not a development, it would seem, to crusade under. Yet when Clive Bell remarked in 1938, in preface of this School, “this is a critical moment for English painting”, he did not speak unduly. Euston Road marked a hiatus in the history of modernism in this country: encouraged an approach to representation which remains a viable practice; and, in its study of visual appearances, produced a body of work exemplary in its conviction, rigour and formal integrity.

This book has been researched with the careful, impartial attentiveness associated with Euston Road painting: facts slowly accumulate; rhetoric is avoided and a priori reasoning stunted. Drawing upon unpublished sketches, notebooks, letters and diaries, among other sources, Bruce Laughton documents the School's formation and existence, as well as the continuation of its ideas at Camberwell School of Art after the war. So thorough is his investigation that we are almost given a day-by-day

account of the picture-making activities of its main protagonists. These are William Coldstream, Claude Rogers, Graham Bell and Victor Pasmore. Among their pupils, Lawrence Gowing, Adrian Stokes and B. A. R. Carter are discussed at some length, but not a single illustration in this book is by a woman artist, though Euston Road students included Elinor Bellingham-Smith, Thelma Hulbert and Margaret Mellis, among others, none of whom receives more than a passing mention. Most chapters concentrate on a particular phase within one artist's career. This brings out the individual progress of Coldstream, Bell, Rogers and Pasmore, but weakens our grasp of chronology and of the development of the group as a whole. Laughton also investigates in depth at the expense of breadth: his insistent focus on the pictorial record confines us to the studio; period politics, crucial in the shaping of Coldstream's and Bell's careers, remain background factors. A suspicion recurs that while detail is pursued, some more urgent connection is being overlooked.

Many of the threads that link Euston Road painting with past practice were forgotten during the early 1930s when, as Coldstream has written, the pressure of economics and politics turned young artists into political activists or forced them into humdrum jobs. He himself gave up painting and worked under John Grierson in the GPO Film Unit. Laughton makes telling connections between skills from documentary films with which Coldstream was involved and certain of his later paintings. But Grierson's “anti-aesthetic” approach and his emphasis on social purpose are underplayed. Working for Grierson, Coldstream came to believe that painting had to engage interest on a human level. Modernist theory had led in the opposite direction: “putting in any facial expression”, Coldstream recalls of the early 1930s, “was absolutely taboo as being vulgar participationism”. But in 1936, after three years' employment in the film unit, he found himself wanting to paint people. As a result his earliest Euston Road-style paintings are portraits.

No longer sidetracked by the example set by Picasso and Matisse, he returned to more indigenous models, notably Steiner, whose 1929

retrospective had been much visited by Coldstream and Rogers, and the Slade. In need of a testimonial in 1936, Coldstream approached the retired Slade Professor, Henry Tonks, who reminded him by letter that behind self-expression in drawing must stand “the expression of solid (three dimensional) form upon a flat surface”. Here lay the nub of the problem. For while the Euston Road School admitted a return to the recording of appearances (“straight painting”, in Coldstream's phrase), the method that evolved negated illusion. As one pupil, Christopher Pimsen, describes it, “the sensation had to pass through to the pure language of paint”. In certain paintings by Coldstream, who, though reserved in manner, had the strongest didactic presence, a veil of thin hatching, produced with a sable brush, falls across form, often denying its directional movement and thereby setting up a delicate tension between structure and representation. The fragility and mournful stillness of Euston Road painting are often directly related to this vainly achieved balance.

Neither Coldstream's hatching nor his insistence on “measuring” became common practice. But all associated with the School were infected by the search for a method that was rigorous, disciplined and free of stylistic shortcuts. The Royal Academy was scorned, its “pseudo-realism” too obviously dependent on formulae. Likewise the butterfly Impasto and sensuous modelling characteristic of Bloomsbury painting between the wars was rejected, even though Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant acted as two of the school's visiting teachers. Opposed to the dominant modernist theories that had led to pure abstraction, Euston Road painters returned to the Post-Impressionists for seemingly reactionary purposes. They aspired to Degas's cold objectivity and Cézanne's searching analysis, while tonally their paintings invite comparison with those by Bastien-Lepage. French influence, filtered through the Slade legacy (“a respect for the austere ‘dab’”, as Rogers saw it) and allied with Sickertian subject-matter, was transformed into something peculiarly British, economical, reticent and poetic.

The intensity of looking associated with the Euston Road School makes orthodox aesthetic

criteria seem trivial. Coldstream, in particular, whose stance Adrian Stokes saw as “extreme” and as isolated as that of Rothko, subtly demolishes traditional expectations. “Merit in painting”, he wrote to his doctor-friend John Rake, “has I believe nothing to do with the ordinary idea of imagination, composition, etc.” For him, what gives Van Eyck's “Man in a Red Turban” merit is the conviction imbued in every touch. In order to obtain a similar certainty, he casts across his canvases “points of registration” which establish a system of related distances. These position his subject. But because he knows, like Cézanne, that vision is subject to shift, owing to the difference between what two eyes, singly, see, the outlines of his forms sometimes shimmer or are left indeterminate. In this fusion of stillness and movement, conviction and doubt, it is the sureness of his uncertainty that impresses and through which his sensibility is displayed. For like the School itself, pressed between the ascendancy of modernist theory and the destruction of war, he struck a balancing act, as Lawrence Gowing once said, between necessity and despair.

Laughton himself trained as a painter at Camberwell, where leading Euston Road figures reassembled in 1945. He has therefore experienced the teaching methods he so well describes. His epilogue, however, can only hint at the enormous influence these painters have had over the past forty years. Coldstream, Pasmore, Rogers and Gowing (Bell died in an air crash in 1943) went on to hold important positions within art institutions and universities, at the Slade, Newcastle and Reading. And though Pasmore's move into abstraction led him in the opposite direction to Coldstream's insistence on “straight painting”, Euston Road associates, in their various ways, did have far-reaching influence on the teaching and practice of art in Britain, not least through the Coldstream Report on art education which, when implemented, drew heavily on Pasmore's ideas. All the evidence suggests that the Euston Road School bred methods and ideas capable of being taught and regenerated. Assessment of its influence is long overdue and one reason why Laughton's book is a landmark.

Bringing accusations to book

A. W. B. Simpson

ROBERT KEE
Trial and Error: The Maguires, the Guildford pub bombings and British justice
284pp. Hamish Hamilton, £10.95.
0241119588
CHRIS MULLIN
Error of Judgement: The truth about the Birmingham bombings
270pp. Chatto and Windus, £10.95.
0701129786

On October 5, 1974, a bomb exploded in the Horse and Groom public house in Guildford. It killed five people, and injured many more, some very severely. Later the same evening another bomb exploded in the nearby Seven Stars. Ten more people were injured. On October 7, a bomb was thrown into the King's Arms in Woolwich; it killed two people and injured others. Five people were charged with the Horse and Groom murders, but proceedings against one, Mrs Anne Maguire, were dropped. The others, Patrick Armstrong, Gerard Conlon, Paul Hill and Carole Richardson were convicted in September 1975 at a trial presided over by Mr Justice Donaldson; he sentenced them to life imprisonment. Armstrong and Hill were also convicted of the Woolwich murders. The police thought they had located the bomb factory; Anne Maguire, her husband, two of her children and three other members of her extended family household were, in February of 1976, tried for operating it. The charge was that they had, on two days in December 1974, been in possession of nitroglycerine for no good reason. They were sentenced, again by Mr Justice Donaldson, to various terms of imprisonment; Anne Maguire got fourteen years. Apart from one, “Giuseppe” Conlon, who died in prison, they are now at liberty again. On November 21, 1974, bombs exploded in Birmingham in The Mulberry Bush and The Taverna, killing twenty-one people and injuring 160. For this atrocity, the worst ever perpetrated by the IRA in England, sixteen were convicted of murder. They are all still serving their sentences of life imprisonment. So seventeen people went to prison for these terrible offences.

These two books set out the story of the three trials and unsuccessful appeals, and outline the history of the IRA bombing campaign of this period, albeit in a way which is not always very easy to follow. It will be recalled that this campaign culminated in the Balcombe Street siege of December 1975, which led to the imprisonment of an IRA unit whose members made no serious claim to innocence. Both accounts belong to that well-established genre, shocking tales of miscarriage of justice, for which material seems always to come readily to hand. The police, the experts and the lawyers all, as ever, receive a bad press; the jury, as ever, escapes blame. The immediate aim of the authors is to persuade the Home Office to do something, and both authors make a strong case that something should be done. Indeed I do not myself see how any fair-minded person who has read these books and followed the

public concern over the convictions could fail to reach the conclusion that a real doubt hangs over all of them and that, in the jargon of the courts, they are not safe.

But what is to be done? Here neither author is very clear as to what action should be taken in these particular cases, much less as to what action needs to be taken to prevent the occurrence of similar problems in the future. Chris Mullin seems to want pardons for those convicted for the Birmingham bombings through executive action, though his dust-jacket writer seeks a retrial. Robert Kee himself does not make it at all clear whether there should be a public or private inquiry, with pardons at the end of it, or a reference back to the Court of Appeal (Criminal Division); and nobody could be very sanguine about the outcome of that. Judges have a heavy investment in the idea that you do not upset the result of a trial unless something very bad happened at it, or some very significant new evidence has come to light, and for some time now nothing new of great weight has come to light. It is simply that concern has built up.

The Home Office is currently brooding on the matter, and no doubt the officials there are privately wishing that both cases would go away. For they, surely, are deeply nervous of reviewing criminal convictions on their merits; they fear the opening of the floodgates. Their worries are in part practical; they do not possess the staff to do the job. Partly they are constitutional; legal dirty linen should be washed by the courts, in particular by the appeal court set up to do this very job back in 1907. Experience, however, suggests that the Court of Appeal, just like the Home Office, possesses neither the staff nor the time nor even the enthusiasm required. It may be rather good at upholding the formalities of the criminal trial but seems pretty hopeless at rooting out those dubious convictions which happen even though the formalities have been observed.

There is a simple reason why this is so; rooting out such cases involves a process of investigation, which cannot be undertaken by a court. And so, if anything is to be done in these cases, as it surely ought to be done, there is a basic and difficult problem of deciding the appropriate machinery to use. This difficulty lies behind the reluctance of the Home Office to become involved, a reluctance which is a continuous cause of complaint from those who, like Messrs Mullin and Kee, present powerful arguments to suggest that injustice has been done. For the Home Office the Birmingham case raises peculiarly delicate problems, for if those convicted are really innocent the logic of the story leads inexorably to the conclusion that there was police misconduct of a quite appalling character. The Guildford cases do not so clearly raise this problem, though they could. All seventeen convictions, if erroneous, must cast a general doubt over the reliability of admissions and confessions obtained through police interrogation, and yet these are in use every day of the week in hundreds of criminal cases. Is the whole system to be put in jeopardy? So runs the argument for inertia.

The general question which books of this

kind raise, but rarely discuss in any depth, is whether it might not be possible, by changes in the law and its administration, to make it much less likely that things could go so wrong in the future. The function of such books as these is confined to particular cases, however, and their authors concentrate on what emerged at the trial, for that is public. But criminal trials are not, and never can be, investigations into the guilt of the accused. This is often put in a pejorative way by saying that the courts are not concerned with discovering the truth, as if in some ideal world they ought to turn themselves into criminal investigation departments. Their function is to subject accusations to formal public scrutiny, and the rules under which this scrutiny takes place are designed in any decent system to redress, to some small degree, the enormous preponderance of power possessed by the prosecution. Perhaps we do not go far enough here, and perhaps there is a case for saying that professional judges sometimes fail to grasp how weak the position of an accused person always is, especially if they are innumerate.

Investigations must take place outside the court room, and are primarily in the hands of the police and forensic auxiliaries; most of what goes on does so in private. Miscarriages of justice usually originate long before courts become involved, and occur because a decision as to guilt is taken too quickly and uncritically. Thereafter official energy is expended not in investigating who did it, but in building up evidence, in the worst cases by dishonest means, to support a conclusion already reached. We cannot expect trials to compensate for all errors of investigation. It is the investigatory stage of the criminal process which needs attention, and what is wrong with it is that it is private; our only window into it is provided by the police and the accused, and nobody knows who to believe.

These two books clearly illustrate this, for most of the uncertainties over these convictions would never have arisen if the process of investigation had itself been made as open to scrutiny as the trial. This could be achieved if all police interrogations had to be tape-recorded or even, in serious cases perhaps, videotaped. The enthusiastic way in which the criminal courts now encourage the use of co-operatively produced police evidence of “verbal” and, accept admissions and confessions, has naturally an effect on police practice; the police deliver what the courts seem to like. We could restrict very severely the admissibility of statements made in police custody, for example by excluding all those made where the accused person had no legal representation. There are other possibilities too. The failure of the authorities to grapple seriously with the problem has its roots in a distorted notion of civil rights. According to this what is called a fair balance (that is a balance unfair to the accused) has to be struck between the rights of the suspect and the public need for protection. Hence persons accused of appalling crimes, as in these two cases, and who therefore need the greatest possible protection when in custody, do not receive it, being sacrificed as it were to a greater good. So long as this philosophy dominates the system, miscarriages of justice will continue to occur when they need not, and will have to be corrected by *ad hoc* executive action. Books such as these serve as part of the remedy for a fundamentally defective system.

The Fifth International Sakharov Hearing: Proceedings edited by Allan Wynn (1986pp. Deutscher. Paperback, £5.95. 0 233 98051 2) has recently been published. The hearing took place in London on April 10 and 11, and the book consists of thirty-two contributions, together with three appendices which were originally presented to the Executive Committee of the Hearing as background information, and short biographical notes on the speakers. The essays include “Andrei Sakharov: A tribute” by Allan Wynn; “Helsinki, Ottawa and the London Sakharov Hearing” by Eileen Yankelevich; “The Sakharov Case and International Law” by Paul Sieghart; “Changes in Soviet Criminal Legislation since the Helsinki Final Act” by Dina Kaminskaya; “Recent Changes in Soviet Legislation: Administrative law and educational reforms” by Louise I. Shanley; and “Repression through Criminal Law in the USSR” by Ferdinand Feldbrugge.



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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Edinburgh EH6 6JH

A clearing for democracy

Dick Wilson

JOHN BRESNAN (Editor)
Crisis in the Philippines: The Marcos era and beyond
284pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press.
£30.10 (paperback, £7.35).
0691105408

The population of the Philippines is as large as that of Britain, distributed over 7,000 islands as far apart as London and Moscow; its people are of many ethnic stocks and speak eighty-seven languages; it produces more films than Britain. Its rich natural resources of minerals and plantation crops, its hard-working labour force, its abundant entrepreneurial skills and proficiency in English, its important community of one million émigrés to the United States who remit to Manila a million dollars a day—all this points to a better future for the country. Yet today thousands starve in the island of Negros, where an Englishman introduced the first modern sugar mill in 1857. Ships arrive at remote ports with arms for rebels, and Communists openly extort large amounts of money, no pain of death, from plantation owners. Every car that stops at traffic-lights in the centre of Manila is liable to be solicited by child beggars. The rich live in colonies defended like military camps, foreigners luddle in their hotels, warned by their friends not to walk the streets, and violence is untaunted.

Experts are divided as to whether the Philippines can rise from its misery and resume the progress for which it was so admired in the 1960s: *Crisis in the Philippines*, edited by John Bresnan, was conceived as a symposium to examine the set-backs to the government of President Ferdinand Marcos after his chief political rival, Benigno Aquino, was assassinated in 1983. This year's February revolution occurred before it went to press, and most of the contributions have been able to take the advent of President Corason Aquino's government into account. Starting from the premiss that the Philippines has more experience of democratic government than any other country in Asia, David Steinberg, in a stimulating discussion of Philippine history, claims that the *ilustrados*, or educated Filipinos of mixed blood who emerged in the later part of Spanish rule, were the first modern South-east Asians. If so, they must have been only marginally ahead of the Basu Ramans, Mryunjays and Rammohun Roys of Bengal in the first decade or two of the nineteenth century. But Steinberg is correct in observing that the élite which governed in Manila under American and Japanese rule continued to do so into the post-war era. "Independence in the Philippines changed neither the players nor the system."

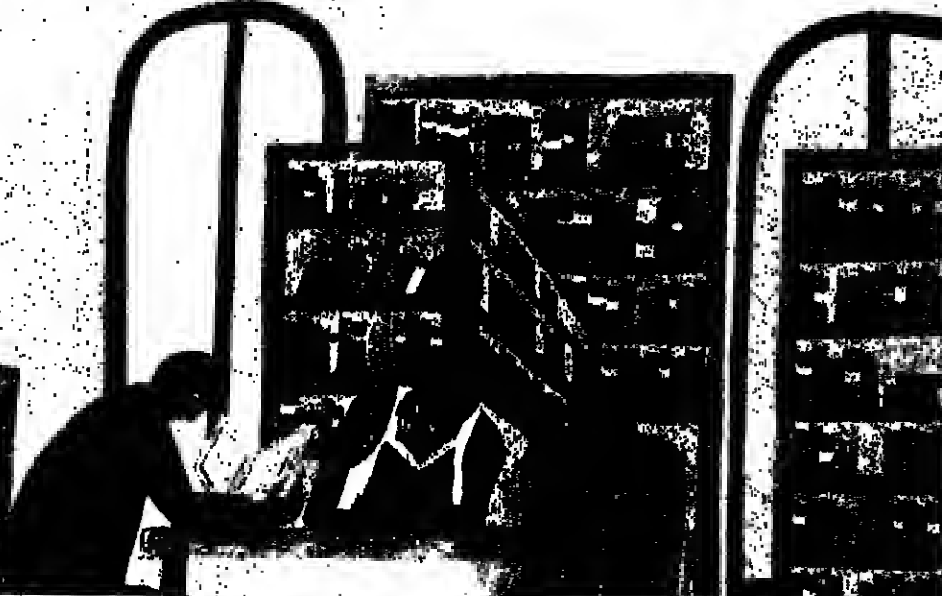
Every President has attempted some kind of land reform, but since the landlords are usually elected to the legislature, they are rarely successful. The two contributors who are most familiar with the rural parts of the country, Wilfredo F. Arce and Ricardo G. Abad, are alarmingly pessimistic. They argue that, since rich and poor have become so polarized, violence is inevitable. The only way that this can be avoided, they believe, is to increase taxation and tax collection at the affluent end of society, implement more welfare-oriented programmes and reduce dependence on overseas economies. It is hard to conceive of any one of these policies being successfully implemented in the next decade. Arce and Abad are sure that the peasantry will not begin to improve its lot until its members organize themselves beyond the limits of the family to the level of the larger community. Both the Communists and the Roman Catholic Church have had some success in creating ties within rural communities; but Marcos's experiment to treat the *barangay* (village council) as a new socio-political unit in the 1970s did not work.

The violence which is seen ahead, not only by these two Filipino writers but by many others, is best attributed to class conflict, which the Communist Party and the New Peoples' Army are exploiting in small areas of the country. William J. Barnds, one of Washington's veteran Asian analysts, supports in his essay at the end of the book the fear that the New Peoples' Army, having once broken out of its Central Luzon homeland, could, at its present rate of progress, take over the country in the early 1990s. This judgment appears to be borrowed from the American military establishment, and without the supporting sociological analysis it is unclear on what he has based his assessment.

One of Steinberg's conclusions is that the Philippines seems to prefer slow evolution under weak leaders to giant strides under strong ones, and this, if true, is obviously a point in Mrs Aquino's favour. Even Marcos, with all the powers that he arrogated to himself over twenty years, was unable to deliver what the people wanted. Lela Garner Noble provides a useful balance-sheet of what Marcos did achieve in the various stages of his much vaunted New Society after he had declared martial law in 1972. To begin with, his technocrats created a rice surplus, an economic revival and some degree of agrarian reform, linked with the *barangays*. They also tried to destroy the rural power of the oligarchs who opposed him. But in 1976 he veered towards more modern capital-intensive projects. His business cronies and family began to profit from these schemes and at this point his wife, Imelda, became prominent and the technocrats were rebuffed. Finally, at the beginning of the 1980s, Cesar Virata, Prime Minister and chief

who persuaded the rival political party leaders Salvador Laurel and Corason Aquino to unite on the same election ticket against Marcos. It was Sin who persuaded Laurel to take second place, and it was he who authorized the people to take to the streets in the name of religion. At the critical juncture, when the extent of electoral fraud had become known, Sin was the kingmaker behind the scenes who openly described Aquino as a second Joan of Arc. At the same time the Pentagon and the American political leadership let it be known that American aid would be withdrawn if soldiers used their weapons against civilians, and United States Generals and Senators made telephone calls to their counterparts in the Philippines to that effect.

It might be argued, though, that it was economic rather than politics that forced Marcos out. After Benigno Aquino was gunned down at Manila airport three years ago, there was a flight of capital and the government was forced to seek a moratorium on its swelling foreign debt. Yet only a month before the assassination, the World Bank had pronounced that the Philippines had joined Thailand and Korea as one of the Newly Industrializing Countries of the Third World.



A detail from one of Jacob Lawrence's "liberty" paintings: it is taken from Jacob Lawrence: American painter by Ellen Harkins Wheat (231pp. University of Washington Press. \$30. 0 295 93644).

among the technocrats, lost to the cronies on the key issue of the enactment of coconut laws.

Carolinn G. Hernandez, at the University of the Philippines, remarks that because of the "long dark night of dictatorship", from 1972 to 1986, the Filipinos have learned the value of democracy, and therefore the democratic ethic has a future. This is the kind of wishful thinking that is characteristic of the intelligentsia. In fact it is equally arguable that Filipinos will support any government, autocratic or permissive, that manages to achieve economic development and social progress. The present government is tolerant and untrammelled, but if its policies do not yield fast results, another kind of ruler may be sought.

Foreigners still find it extraordinary that both people and élite acquiesced in the Marcos dictatorship. But what is not spelt out in this book in sufficient detail is the means by which he perpetuated his rule. Those who obeyed his will were generously rewarded, those who failed or refused were brutally punished and he continued to issue threats of violence on television from Hawaii long after he had fled. In the end, in order to assure his own safety and that of his family and wealth he had to retain political power. He feared that if he resigned from office he would be dead within days. Election fraud thus became an art into which unprecedented ingenuity and resources were poured.

Another myth created by the February revolution is that Marcos was toppled by "people power". But the people who came out on the streets to sit in the paths of tanks and subvert the soldiers with garlands were not peasants. They were mostly the new sub-élite of the capital city, the intellectuals and professionals, novices and nuns, shopkeepers and self-employed — and especially the young. But they would not have won the day without the intervention of the Church and the Americans. It was Cardinal Sin of Manila, now informally recognized as leader of the Philippine Church,

In his early years Marcos had stressed the creation of import-substitution industries at the expense of agriculture, burdening the country with factories unable to stand on their own feet and needing constant protection. After he had achieved self-sufficiency in the staple food crop, rice, he let the pressure drop and allowed the deficit to come back again later. Of course, he was hit by the oil crisis, but so was every other government. The strongest indictment against him is that he allowed the foreign debt which reached the level of a whole year's Gross National Product — or 27 billion US dollars. His legacy to the Philippines was an economy obliged to earmark almost a half of every export dollar earned to repay foreign debt. Social violence, which is the greatest threat to the Aquino government, is the direct result of economic recession.

Foreign officials dealing with the new government on economic issues are discovering some indecisiveness, as President Aquino promises to repay the whole foreign debt, but her leading Economics Minister, Solita Monsod, says that it will be selectively repudiated. Such equivocation appears in other areas of policy. Aquino wants to talk to the Communist and Muslim insurgents and draw away their half-hearted supporters, while her former Defence Minister, Juan Ponce Enrile, warns that these rebels are taking advantage of her clemency in order to extend their powers further. The Cabinet is divided as to whether to follow the austere prescriptions of the World Bank or to stimulate demand at the risk of inflation.

Although *Crisis in the Philippines* is mainly about recent events in that country, there is actually a strong interest in American policy options. Theodore Friend reminds Americans who believe that they have a special relationship with, or mission in, the Philippines that, far from "liberalizing" them from Spanish rule ninety years ago, the United States fought a vicious war against the Philippine nationalists under Aguinaldo, thus becoming involved — on

the wrong side — in the "first Asian revolution against Western power". The same mistake was made in Vietnam. And it is, perhaps, with the unacknowledged shadow of that Indo-China fiasco overshadowing them, that these authors recommend American disengagement from the Philippines, as a long-term strategy. In the short term, the United States should support the Philippines as an ally rather than as a client. Barnds spells out the short-term agenda of support — economic and military aid, rescheduling of debts, assistance in recovering the Marcos properties.

The inference is that the American military, naval and air bases, so important for Pacific strategy, should not be retained against Filipino will. Although the issue will arise in 1991, Filipino opinion seems not greatly exercised about the question at present. It is relatively recently that the Americans conceded such points as allowing a Philippine officer to be in nominal command of the bases, and the Philippine flag to be flown. One Filipino contributor to this book, Jesus P. Estanislao, Chairman of the Development Bank of the Philippines, alone argues for phasing out the bases. In practice the Philippines may be satisfied with getting a little more "rent" than before when it next negotiates — were it not for the new factor unknown to the contributors of the book, that the new constitution (if it is ratified, as seems likely) contains a renunciation of nuclear power. This could inhibit the deployment of nuclear-powered vessels and nuclear weapons of any kind from the bases.

A high standard of both judgment and exposition is maintained throughout *Crisis in the Philippines*, even if weakened by the understandable air of uncertainty as to what happens after Marcos. In this respect we have an advantage of several months. Aquino is not easily assessed. Slight and vulnerable, she gives an appearance of ordinariness which the public welcomes after Marcos. Her judgment has been surprisingly good. She resisted her own family's advice to boycott the January election. After polling day, she vetoed the plan of some advisers to embark on a course of civil disobedience, preferring a less hazardous one-day strike. Critics assailed her dependence on family advisers, notably her elder brother Jose Cojuangco, Jr, but it is clear that she knows her own mind and is nobody's pawn. Are her goals of sincerity and moderation in government enough? The prospect of further elections in 1987 has stirred the various parties in her loose coalition to write contradictory manifestos and activate their mutually competing grass-roots organizations. The two most experienced politicians in her original Cabinet, Laurel and Enrile, both on the right of the Cabinet spectrum, were already expressing their restlessness in public before Enrile's dismissal last month.

Actually, the Marcos despotism, thinly disguised as a democracy by rigged elections, brought the Philippines more into line with South-east Asian trends. None of the beads of government in Indonesia, Malaysia or Singapore has yielded power to any opponent in twenty years or more, and there is little prospect that they will. The group, family or clan is still more important than the individual in spite of five centuries of Hispanization. Aquino is a Marian who believes in miracles. Can she back the jungle back and make a clearance — "a democratic space", her publicists call it — for common sense and trust and good housekeeping to grow? When her impromptu team of ministers was united against Marcos, it looked as if she could. Now that they are squabbling over Senate seats and Cabinet seniority, not to mention the timetable for counterinsurgency and, reportedly, Aquino's State role, it looks more doubtful. Laurel apparently expected her to act as a head of state, leaving him to run the government, while Enrile assumed that she would follow his lead on defence matters. She has now served notice that she intends to control her own Cabinet, without Enrile. For the moment the two lions are dormant, but if either or both were to decide to challenge Aquino, the beneficiaries can only be the Communist left, which would come to power over the bodies of a large number of regular soldiers, policemen and local functionaries, many of whom are liberal in outlook. It would be a receipt for national prostration.

Lessons unlearned

Tamar Jacoby

ROBERT E. HUYSER
Misos in Tehran
386pp. Deutsch. £12.95.
0233798933
WARREN CHRISTOPHER, HAROLD H. SAUNDERS, GARY SICK, ROBERT CARSWELL, RICHARD J. DAVIS, JOHN E. HOFFMAN Jr, ROBERTS B. OWEN, OSCAR SCHACHTER AND ABRAHAM A. RUBINOFF
American Hostages in Iran: The conduct of a crisis
443pp. Yale University Press. Paperback, £12.95.
030035845

Americans are famous for their short historical memory, and Ronald Reagan is apparently no exception. Just six years after the hostage crisis which drove Jimmy Carter from the White House and effectively elected Reagan, Washington has again been humiliated by the radical anti-American government in Tehran. President Reagan has been caught selling weapons to the very people who took the original fifty-two hostages, and the Iranian mullahs have again got the better of the great power they so despise. For all the United States's superior economic and military might, the Iranian Revolution remains beyond its grasp.

Nearly seven years after the fall of the Shah, details of what happened during the Iranian revolution are still coming to light in first-person accounts by American officials. Some half-dozen members of the Carter Administration, including the former President himself, have already published memoirs of those anxious and humiliating months. The two books under review are important additions to the historical record and to the debate — which transcends the Iranian case — about what the United States should do when its Third World allies are threatened by revolution.

Robert E. Huyser's *Mission to Tehran* is a vivid and straightforward account of his mission to Iran on behalf of President Carter. General Huyser spent a month in Tehran in early 1979 — this was the time of the Shah's departure and the return from exile of Ayatollah Khomeini — trying to reassure and rally the Iranian military, and to get them to support their government against the revolutionary mobs. His assignment, it seems clear in retrospect, was doomed from the start.

Spy in the sky

John Ranelagh

MICHAEL R. BESCHLOSS
Mayday: Eisenhower, Khrushchev and the U-2 affair
444pp. Faber. £14.95.
057144930

Mayday is about the politics surrounding the shooting down of Gary Powers in his U-2 spy-plane near Sverdlovsk in the Soviet Union on May 1, 1960; only two weeks before a summit meeting between Eisenhower, de Gaulle, Macmillan and Khrushchev was scheduled to take place. The CIA had assumed, ever since it began using the U-2 to verify the Soviet Union in 1956, that the plane could not remain invulnerable, and by 1959 the Russians had developed anti-aircraft technology adequate to shoot it down. Yet for reasons that Michael R. Beschloss does not go into in much depth, the Russians chose to wait until two weeks before the summit before deploying it. The likely reason was that the Soviet military had become disenchanted with Khrushchev and were worried that as a result of his willingness to consider *détente* with Eisenhower, the Soviet Union would find itself in a permanently inferior military position. Shooting down the U-2 would sabotage the summit and thus provide them with time to catch up. Michael R. Beschloss is as concerned with Eisenhower's search for *détente* as with the engineering and the intelligence role of the U-2. Consequently, the achievement of the

Tehran was in a state of upheaval; the economy was paralysed by strikes. Huyser writes graphically of the huge demonstrations and menacing atmosphere — the smell of burning tyres, the chanting in the streets, the anti-American graffiti and the distant night-time sounds of rifle-fire. The Shah had already decided to go by the time Huyser arrived. He left the country in the hands of the Prime Minister, Shahpur Bakhtiari, a tentative and ineffectual "moderate" installed far too late to stem or channel the tide of change that was sweeping over Iran. Bakhtiari depended utterly on the armed forces, but the generals were themselves uncertain of their role and ill-prepared to help in running the country.

What is interesting and provocative about Huyser's account is that he still believes his mission could have been a success, if only the United States had been prepared to go all the way in its support of the Bakhtiari government. Huyser places the blame for what happened not on conditions in Iran, difficult as these were, but on what he sees as a failure of will on the part of the American government. He charges the Carter Administration with hesitancy, and his book is filled with the frustration of a man itching to take charge of a situation that no one else seemed willing or able to control. Huyser believes that the circumstances called for intervention by the Iranian armed forces, and that, since neither the Shah nor Bakhtiari was willing to order this, the United States should have taken the lead.

Would it have worked? Would a coup have stopped the mullahs, or merely postponed the day of reckoning? There is no way of knowing, neither then nor now. Huyser comes across as a decent, capable man, and his passionate conviction has a certain force. There is also clearly something to his charges that the policy-makers in Washington were divided and inept. Yet it is by no means clear that they had the ability to avert the triumph of the Ayatollah. For all Huyser's optimism and his bullishness — or perhaps, in part, because of them — the unintended burden of his book is to remind us of the limits to American power.

It is a theme that carries over into *American Hostages in Iran*, which consists of a number of essays written by nine high-level officials of the Carter Administration who were involved in the day-to-day handling of the hostage crisis. The book was published last year but has recently been reissued in paperback. The essays take up the story some ten months after Huyser left Tehran, on the day that the Iranian students seized the American embassy. They

plane and its significance are not really covered. But the drama of the crisis, the leading personalities, and the geopolitical background are all dealt with thoroughly.

One of the main characters in the story is Richard Bissell, the originator of the U-2 project and much else besides, who began working for the CIA in 1954 as special assistant to the Director, Allen Dulles. In less than two years, virtually single-handedly, he revolutionized intelligence-gathering. He had recognized that technological advances of all kinds could be put at the service of intelligence, thereby diminishing the risk to human life. The U-2 was a remarkable achievement for a number of reasons. For one thing, the new plane was to fly above the ceiling of other planes and anti-aircraft missiles, to fly longer and further than any plane before it and to carry a camera and any other equipment of bours of non-stop remote-control operation. Bissell completed the project with astonishing speed: less than a year after he took charge the first U-2 was flying.

It was needed because the CIA was having problems verifying information from the Soviet Union. The "U" stood for "Utility". A wide-angle 180-inch lens provided high-definition photographs covering 125-mile widths of land in one frame, and recorded on a special lightweight film. The first planes had a range of 2,200 miles, but within five years this range was increased to over 4,000 miles. They could fly over 13 miles high, and the normal operating level was over 70,000 feet — all this when the official world altitude record for aircraft was 65,889 feet. The U-2 was not designed to warn of immediate attack. Its operational use indi-

trace the tortuous crisis through to the end: from the imposition of economic sanctions and early negotiations with "moderates" like the Prime Minister, Abolhasan Bani-Sadr, through to the breakdown of talks, the disastrous American rescue attempt and, eventually, to the successful working out of a deal. Each chapter treats a separate aspect of the 441-day episode, and attempts to make sense of its legal and financial complexity. Many of the essays contain vivid narrative detail as well as analysis, and they leave one with the feeling of having peeped through a keyhole while sensitive negotiations and secret planning sessions were in progress.

The authors' expertise covers a broad range. Gary Sick's essay on military options and the chapter on economic sanctions by Richard J. Davis and Robert Carswell are particularly sharp and informative; but they have in common a bureaucratic outlook and, even today, offer a surprisingly uniform assessment of the crisis. In contrast to many outside observers, both then and now, these authors in general agree that the United States was right to negotiate with the lawless Iranians and probably right in the end to abstain from the use of force; all of them take pride in the fact that, despite the provocation, Washington remained within the rule of law. They tend to minimize the humiliation suffered by the United States and to emphasize the hard work, diligence and diplomatic professionalism which marked the Administration's response. They thus remain loyal to President Carter's view of the world, with its emphasis on conciliation diplomacy and international law, despite the drubbing it has received from history.

And yet in the end, as in Robert E. Huyser's book, the lasting impression is one of futility in the face of the Iranian upheaval. As Sick notes in his thoughtful essay, Washington simply had to wait for "the peculiar rhythms of Iranian internal politics to play themselves out": the United States got its hostages back only when they had served Tehran's purposes, when the ayatollahs had more or less completed their revolution and had exorcised American influence from Iran.

For Americans, it was an extremely painful and chastening period, difficult to contemplate even today. That perhaps is why the lesson was lost on Washington and why it has been punished a second time. Today, as in 1979, it has proved a mistake to seek out "the moderates" in Tehran. The Iranian revolution still has no room for moderation or for renewed ties with the "Great Satan".

ated that the United States was concentrating on monitoring the Soviet Union as a whole rather than simply its military capability.

The shooting-down of the plane had repercussions for the CIA, and for Eisenhower when it was discovered that Powers was still alive, having neither been killed nor, as the agency expected, committed suicide so as not to fall into Russian hands. In consequence, Eisenhower was discovered in a lie (he had denied that the plane was engaged in espionage).

A longer-term effect of the U-2 episode was on the Soviet leadership. If the Soviet Union had had the technology, its planes would willingly have overflown the United States, so the U-2 revealed that, despite the hullabaloo over Sputnik, Soviet engineers were indeed far behind their American counterparts. To catch up with and, if possible, overtake them became an obsession of the Soviet ruling clique. They had a large degree of popular support because of the psychological effect of the shooting-down. The Russians had previously assumed that distance provided them with their best defence. The U-2 shattered this complacency. The arms build-up of the 1960s probably has its origin in this crisis. As for Gary Powers, less than two years after being shot down and sent to prison, he was exchanged for Rudolf Abel, who had been head of a North American Soviet espionage ring until his capture in 1957. On his return home Powers succeeded in convincing his debriefers that he had behaved perfectly well in Soviet hands. Nevertheless he lived with guilt for the rest of his life: he felt that he had been expected to die and that by surviving he had let his side down.

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THE BODLEY HEAD

Profit without honour

Victoria Glendinning

JEFFREY ARCHER
A Matter of Honour
350pp. Hodder and Stoughton. £9.95.
0340 394633

Jeffrey Archer deals in raw story, which is necessary and sufficient for achieving popular success. Literary novelists, transcending or bypassing raw story for a variety of reasons both negative and positive, may find his success annoying, but if they find it incomprehensible they have lost sight of the origins and first purposes of fictional narrative.

Mr Archer writes stories for boys. There are no grown-ups: there are schoolboys who have outgrown their grey flannel shorts and gone into politics, the armed services, high finance, espionage, crime and similar pots of responsibility where the captain of games, the bully, the sneak, the cheat and the rival – especially the rival – can continue to act out their roles. The mythology underpinning his fiction is that of John Buchan and Captain W. E. Johns, creator of Biggles: "The throttle's full out", says a pilot in his most recent novel, *A Matter of Honour*, as the firing begins, "the bullets ripping into the fuselage".

Impressive fathers loom large in all Archer's first chapters. Adam Scott's soldier father in *A Matter of Honour* had "high standards" and Adam "admired him above all men". Qualities of "leadership and example" and the importance of family tradition are taken seriously. Adam is a chip off the old block, setting out to clear his father's name of undesired dishonour. Other strong male figures reinforce him – his PT instructor from Sandhurst (Adam is very "fit") and his former English master: Adam holds out under torture by mechanically reciting the titles of Shakespeare's plays. Mothers play minor roles. In one of Archer's short stories mother looks on while father flogs son with a studded belt. The boy, of course, "never flinched or murmured".

Archer has deflected accusations of public-school misogyny by creating (in *The Prodigal Daughter* and *Shall We Tell The President?*) the daughter of a Polish immigrant who becomes the first woman President of the United States.

Horror in the small towns

Roz Kaveney

STEPHEN KING
It
912pp. Hodder and Stoughton. £12.95.
0340 364777

The novels of Stephen King have worked their way comprehensively through most of the stock material of pulp magazine horror – vampires, revenants, psychokinetics and the possessed; they also represent a thoroughgoing attempt to reconcile the values of the generation of 1968, the Woodstock generation, with those deencies to be associated with a largely imaginary small-town America. What lifts King's novels out of the usual run of his chosen genre is as much his sheer unembarrassed enjoyment of his subject matter as his less openly acknowledged serious aims. He can (intermittently) write scenes about the terrible emotions of common life as powerful, if not as stylish, as any in contemporary American fiction: at such times, it is possible to see King flirting with seriousness, but a combination of sentimentality of thought, vulgarity of expression and a populist ethic which embraces these as positive goods will always keep him from consummation. In the end he is the writer he is, and, as bestselling authors on his scale go, considerably better an artist than he might have got away with being – and still have sold his books to the movies and bought the biggest house in the town where he grew up in a trailer.

It is a grab-bag of fantasies, held together by a consistent, if woolly-minded, moral vision. Crucial to its plot and complex structure is an elaborate fantasy of making good. In 1958, a group of eleven-year-olds in Derry, Maine, various sorts of victim and outsider, are united in friendship – the fat boy, the boy who stomps, the girl on the brink of puberty whose

Having made his token woman of achievement as conspicuous and as phallic as the Statue of Liberty, Archer is free to express sexual values of a more traditional kind. His women are wife-material, mistress-mateoal or expendable, ie, corpse-mateoal. Sex is a convertible currency. Archer men make love with their wallets, and if the women make fools of them their disappointment is that of painters who have made a bad bet. Buying dinner for a woman may or may not be "a worthwhile investment", and in the story "Henry's Hiccup" a man sees that "chorus girls", when finished with, "always received some suitable memento to ensure that no scandal ensued".

The expression "chorus girl" is antiquarian. Archer fiction, in spite of much plane-hopping and bed-hopping, is old-fashioned. Like most fantasy literature it is regressive and conservative, set in the past or the future but never for long in the intractable present. *A Matter of Honour* is set in the 1960s, when Archer was representing Great Britain in the 100 metres – gentle, far-off times: "Adam hunted the cable ball-u-crown and waited for the change." Adam finds the 1960s disturbingly permissive. Archer men are not principally interested in pleasure.

They are interested, like most sprinters and schoolboys, in winning. Archer fiction is essentially about rivalry and competition. In *First Among Equals* Charles Seymour, the younger of twin sons of a peer, realizes "the full significance of coming second in life's first race" and determines to come first in all the others. The title *Kane and Abel* speaks for itself. Archer, typically, sets up two or more high achievers approaching the same winning-post at speed from different angles. In *A Matter of Honour* the duel to the death is between decent Adam Scott and Romanov, a Russian agent who is "ambitious, ruthless, arrogant but not always reliable".

Archer does not spatter his fiction with brand-names and style-pointers, but he includes real-life figures and is prodigal with locations and situations which require research or inside knowledge – in this case, the geography of the Kremlin and of Swiss bank vaults, the touring schedule of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the side-roads off the N1 from Paris to Boulogne, and the layout of the

father's brutality is progressively acquiring a sexual tinge, the short-sighted loudmouth who does imitations. In the 1980s, they are summoned back – now a famous architect, a popular novelist, a fashion designer, a radio disc jockey . . . King is not saying that all success comes from early trauma, or that the precociously talented are always the victimized, but he implies both, and makes more plausible the involvement of these characters in a plot which makes them champions of feeble good against ultimate Evil. If you can escape small-town life and the evil-haired which is inflicted on child-outsiders by their peers, combating the negative principle of the universe is, well, child's play.

A writer committed to popular forms, King also has a deep commitment to the traditional pieties of story-telling; he starts with not one narrative hook, but three. In 1958, a small boy sails a paper boat along a gutter in the rain; something that appears to be a clown kills him brutally. In 1984, two male lovers are attacked by a bunch of young thugs; when one of them is thrown over a bridge into the river, the clown is waiting for him. Haulon, the local librarian, the one among the original group of children who stayed in their home town, starts telephoning them to hold them to the oath they swore a quarter-century before; and the first of them lie rings, a prosperous accountant in Atlanta, Georgin, slits his wrists in the bath rather than obey the summons.

For King's sort of popular writer, the problem of evil is primarily how to make it interesting and convincing. The thing that lurks in Derry, periodically stirring up racial unrest in between snacks on small children, is conceived of as terribly powerful, but not terribly intelligent. In the 1950s and again in the 80s, it manipulates the person the principals are most scared of: Henry Bowers, a school bully gradually driven insane by the beatings of his

Louvre, where Adam is pursued by his enemies "through the great arch into Seventeenth Century – Murillo, Van Dyck, Poussin . . . on into Sixteenth Century – Raphael, Caravaggio, Michelangelo". No note-book jottings are wasted, however banal. One single-sentence paragraph reads: "The airport bus that travelled to and from the city took only twenty minutes to reach the centre of Geneva." Not many people know that, unless they have read the Swissair brochures. These homely details are glue binding the reader to the exotic plot. When Adam, off on his dangerous quest, goes to the bank and signs "the tops of ten travellers' cheques in the cashier's presence", every reader who has ever taken a package holiday is there with him.

Archer's writing is functional and unremarkable when he uses what Hemingway called "short declarative sentences". Trouble sets in with promiscuous adverbs. Adam is not just surprised but "genuinely surprised"; he is not sble to check but "to accurately check". Tautology is a tiger-troop, as in a description of a place "cartographically described on the map as Cambridge". Muddles arise from single misplaced words. When Romanov, disguised as a chauffeur, hails a cab, "He didn't notice the taxi-driver's look of disbelief at his passenger's chauffeur-clad vision." (But it wasn't the passenger's vision that evoked the disbelief.) In a short story, "The Luncheon", a man asks in a bank for a statement of his account, which is at almost zero: "The teller handed me a long piece of paper unworthy of its amount." (It was the amount, surely, that was unworthy of the long piece of paper.)

There is a potentially painful tension in all Archer's fiction between the will to win at all costs – which, in this pseudo-adult world, means getting power and lots of money – and the concept of private honour. This conflict, implanted in Archer heroes by the confused British morality that they inherit from their fathers, is never investigated. But the muddled values, like the sometimes muddled sentences, are part of the package. You can decline to buy it, just as a boy can decline to listen to someone telling ripping yarns in the dorm after lights-out. But no one except the most priggish of literary school-prefects would ask Jeffrey Archer to stop.

equally psychotic father. On the rare occasions when we are allowed to see inside It's mental processes, it seems to think rather like Bowers: what is smaller is prey now, what is larger is to be got in a moment of inattention. When King shows It in action he cheats by allowing it to manifest itself as the clown, as a syphilitic tramp, a giant bird, the Teenage Werewolf from the film the children have just been watching, and, in a moment of self-indulgence on King's part, a red 1958 Plymouth Fury car. Evil terrifies in this book by acting out genre expectations; King is a devout user of familiarity. Good, often as not, resides in the familiarity of brand-names – often literally. Each novel King writes has its own illogical incantatory slogans floating just below the surface of the characters' minds – in *It* it is such phrases as "The turtle cannot help us" and "the ritual of Chud", phrases whose literal meaning is part of the silly cosmological guff that is the major weakness of the climax, but which before that point make the dream-like seem as much a part of real life as the advertising slogans and comedians' catch-phrases which drift in and out of the children's speech.

It is not the most satisfactory of King's novels, nor will it, probably, be one of his most popular. It tries a little too hard to be the great American horror novel, and suffers from a proliferation of storylines and a lack of full disclosure at the climax – If an author opts for detailed realism the rest of the time, such withholding can look more like fudging than leaving it to the reader's imagination. King's final sequence, in which the writer Bill restores the sanity of his catatonic wife as they ride out of the wrecked town on the bicycle he has rescued from his childhood, is corny, crackbrained and sentimental, and, in its reference to Orpheus, pretentious; but, like the ramshackle like itself, and like King's work in general, it does, just about, the job it was manufactured for.

How the tough get going

Dick Davis

JAMES CLAVELL
Whirlwind
1,026pp. Hodder and Stoughton. £12.95.
0340 397241

Whirlwind, which its author calls an "adventure story", is set in Iran shortly after the Islamic revolution: the plot concerns a rich international company's attempt to evacuate its pilots and helicopters to a friendly Arab Emirate on the other side of the Gulf. The first scene shows us a helicopter flying low over a praying mullah who furiously and incandescently shoots at the departing foreign intruder: this scene more or less encapsulates what the novel has to say and is repeated with variations *ad nauseam* for the next thousand or so pages. It is very difficult to see why the novel is so long – there is certainly no need for it – and it is almost as if gargantuan length were being offered as a guarantee of, or perhaps substitute for, quality.

The characterization is minimal: the pilots are differentiated largely by nationality (Australian, Finnish, British, etc) and by their slightly different swearing vocabularies: they are all tough men who are good in a crisis and good in bed and have hearts of gold beneath their rough-diamond exteriors. Despite the lack of subtlety with which they are depicted, they are intermittently – particularly when airborne – believable. The Iranians are completely unbelievable: the men are devious and cruel, the women are devious and sexy; the men play with jewelled daggers – or automatic weapons – and smile, the women are of the "curve of her breasts proud under the sweater" kind. The women are also good in a crisis (though not as good as the pilots) and in bed (every bit as good as the pilots); whereas Iranian men are highly strung in a crisis and – we are given to understand – nasty in bed. Beneath the polite surface all nationalities hate all other nationalities and think of them as consisting of dogs, sons of whores etc.

The actual escape is an exciting read: helicopters have to be flown from three different sites simultaneously, there are last minute delays, bad weather, scrambled fighters to intercept them and so on. This is easily the best part of the book and seems the kind of thing James Clavell was born to write: unfortunately it does not get under way until around page 800, and the reader's mind is by then almost numb with clichés about Islam, mullahs, fate, death, karma, good men in a crisis and breasts proud under sweaters.

Much of the novel's attraction must depend on the vicarious insight it claims to give into three seemingly glamorous worlds – high finance, the expatriate pilots' life, Iranian revolution – of which most readers will have little knowledge. Linked with this is what E. M. Forster called "the consolations of history": "we cannot visit either the great or the rich when they are our contemporaries, but by a fortunate arrangement the palaces of Ujjain and the warehouses of Ormus are open for ever and we can even behave outrageously in them without being expelled". And outrageously – with arrogance, sadism and self-congratulation – is how the reader of this bestselling novel is invited to behave.

I cannot vouch for the authenticity or otherwise of the scenes of high financial chit-chat given here, or of those of life in the helicopter pilot's hot seat/bed, but I can say that the version of Iranian society offered is tripe. The book bristles with solecisms about Iran, the caricatures of Iranians are offensive (perhaps understandable in a novel of this kind, which has to have baddies, but offensive nevertheless); there is not much Persian in the book but almost all of what there is has been so garbled as to be gibberish. The author insists on referring to Persian as "Farsi" throughout; this is very irritating. "They were speaking Farsi" is as silly a sentence in a novel written in English as "They were speaking deutsch" would be. About the only thing to do with Iran which Clavell conveys with any accuracy is the nature of the scenery; as soon as people begin to populate the scenery, accuracy is abandoned for cliché, and usually erroneous cliché at that.

The pecker order

John Melmoth

TRUMAN CAPOTE
Answered Prayers
181pp. Hamish Hamilton. £9.95.
0241 19626

Although, given his subject's inveterate habit of self-publicization, the provenance must remain suspect, Jean Cocteau is said to have described Truman Capote as a ten-year-old angel with a wicked mind. The photograph on the dust-jacket of *Answered Prayers* reminds us that even the faces of nugsels can be ravaged by too much booze and too many pills, while the contents reveal a very dirty mind at work. The distinction is an important and not necessarily derogatory one. *Haute bohemia's* fat-backs and sleazy patricians, on whom Capote turned with scintillating malice, are seen to maximum disadvantage when genitally preoccupied. The gaff is blown, here, on the libidinal concerns of a *beau monde* of shipping magnates, film stars, successful artists and Seventh Avenue rag-traders. This is best done in contravention of received notions of good taste and of the protocols of acquaintanceship. Cecil Beaton: "The most distressing fact of growing old is that I find my private parts shrinking." Greta Garbo: "Ah, if only I could say the same."

Answered Prayers, billed as an unfinished novel, has three parts – "Unspoiled Monsters" (the autobiography of a "Hershey Bar whore"); "Kate McCloud" (a sentimental love story); and "La Côte Basque" (an everted tale of café society) – which were originally published in *Esquire* in 1975 and 1976 as chapters of a putatively major work in progress. All three fragments are narrated by one P. B. Jones, whose breathtakingly disingenuous claim to objectivity precedes a public and lingering dismemberment of his victims. Jones maintains that "if I change most of the names, I could publish this as a novel. Hell, I've nothing to lose; of course, a couple of people might try to kill me, but I'd consider that a favour." In the event, publication had a calamitous impact on Capote's social life. In addition, his ostracism, by the people who had become his only topic, effectively finished him as a writer.

Ten years on, *Answered Prayers* can be read as a historical novel bent on dismantling the glitz and depravity of a crummy *nucleus régime* whose way of life was built on inconsequential sexual contacts made tolerable by cocaine and liquors and is now threatened by AIDS. Unflinchingly taxonomic, it records the greedy chill of old fags with their teeth fastened on young Ganymedes, and of bejewelled boilers ("old hides") with the instincts of high-class *putanas*. It is a brittle expression of choler, a sustained mew of bitchiness. Once the shooting starts, almost no one gets out alive – Alice Tullies: "a moustachioed spider feeling its feeders"; Peggy Guggenheim: "a long haired Bert Lahr" whose affair with Samuel Beckett "makes one wonder about . . . his pretentious aloofness"; Barbara Hutton: "a dime store maharani", once a plump "wallflower butterball", now an aarexic scoffing tapeworm; Wallis Simpson and "the duke", victims of

hives; Princess Margaret: "such a drone . . . Her mother's a darling, but the rest of the family . . ."; Jackie Onassis and Lee Radziwill: "a pair of Western geisha girls"; Garbo: "dry and drushty, like an abandoned temple". The character assassinations range from the engaging – the party was marvellous "if you've never been to a party before" – to the poisonous: "kissing her . . . was like playing post office with a dead and rotting whale".

It soon becomes clear that Capote has a problem with women, who fare conspicuously worse than their menfolk. Their rapaciousness is recorded in a handy "Old Texas saying: women are like rattlesnakes – the last thing that dies is their tail." An equally apparent fixation on appendages indicates, however, that Capote may also have a problem with men. There are just so many ways that even the most earnest of phallophiles can enmesh about the object of his desires, and Capote explores most of them. In the "pecker parade", "dicks" are variously "dark fat mouthwatering" or "eleven-inch café-au-lait sinker[s] thick as a man's wrist", their owners, force-fed on oysters and caviar, primed to launch "a load that damn near flooded the floor". Blustering phallocentricity is a familiar stick with which to beat the dying snake of female sexuality.

Capote is not concerned to propose any viable alternative to this pecking (or pecker) order: the only way out is disorder. The pampered conspiracies and whispered betrayals of La Côte Basque take place within a few blocks of the frenetic low life of Eighth Avenue, where prostitutes, "luxurious Latin pimps", male hustlers, S-and-M pundits from The Loading Zone, sailors, beggars and "white trash farm boys" new in town pursue their curious ends.

Answered Prayers, by no means as bad as its detractors have claimed, is careful to have it both ways. On the one hand, as the epigraph from Saint Teresa – "more tears are shed over answered prayers than unanswered ones" – makes plain, it is a moral tale. Absolute self-gratification is shown to be demoralizing; the completely spoiled are completely unattractive. But it is also an act of provocation with an irresistible prurience factor. Its immediate entry into the bestseller lists suggests that its author knew his business.

For all that it is not *Breakfast at Tiffany's* or *In Cold Blood*, it is certainly never boring – provided one has the least interest in the secret lives of the rich and famous. If it is true that Capote occasionally tries too hard – Alice Lee Langman's voice is "as cello contralto as a mourning dove" – much of the writing is original and beguilingly misanthropic. The novel's principal weakness is that delays in publication have rendered it *passé* (where are Mick and Jerry, Koo and Joan?), the worst possible lapse in a world which puts a premium on modishness.

After all the posing, pursuing, climbing, humping and dumping, Capote closes on a moment of stillness in a restaurant in the late afternoon as the staff clear up. Inside, there is "an atmosphere of luxurious exhaustion, like a ripened, shedding rose". Outside, ordinary people go about their business, ignorant of, and largely indifferent to, the doings of the damaged goods who masquerade as the beautiful people.

The tick revisited

Michael Hofmann

PATRICK SOKIND
Perfume: The story of a murderer
Translated by John E. Woods
186pp. Hamish Hamilton. £9.95.
0241 19197

Patrick Sokind's story (reviewed in *TLS*, October 11, 1985) of the freakishly gifted Grenouille – odourless and all-smelling – is pleasantly and artfully told, with an eye to the possibilities of embellishment, little touches of irony and grim, imaginative humour. It is a brilliant unfolding of a single idea, but there is something static about the conception, the way the central character can be exhausted in a single simile: the tick, waiting for blood.

For the most part, John E. Woods's trans-

lation copes cleverly with the specialized, synaesthetic vocabulary of scents: "It was fresh, but not frenetic. It was floral, without being unctuous. It possessed depth, a splendour, abiding, voluptuous, rich brown depth – and yet was not in the least excessive or bombastic." On occasions, he is mid-Atlantic and too modern: "sick to the stomach", he says, or "an additive for fountains". He can be short of tact: "There were a baker's dozen of performers in Paris in those days" is a rather ugly notion. And "the master scent" for "den prägenden Duft" raises suspicions about German that happens not to be true in this instance.

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Down these meaner streets

Michael Wood

ELMORE LEONARD
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014005718

Unknown Man No 89
221pp. Penguin. £1.95.
014005726

Sam Spade and Philip Marlowe were tough in their time, but recent American crime fiction tends to make them look like kindly nannies, mere bleeding hearts. The mean streets have got meaner since Chandler wrote about them, and the same goes for the bars, brothels, clubs, diners, gangs, resort hotels, apartment blocks, tuxedos, residences and police precincts. Ross Macdonald's Lew Archer became a designed anachronism in his later career, weary, wise, straight, the man with the divorce and the beat-up Porsche, the guy who's seen it all - except, it turns out, that he hasn't seen the half of it. Even the old locations, Los Angeles and New York, seem tame and faded, almost genteel. The real meanness is on the streets of Detroit,

Miami, Atlantic City, countless little mid-western towns with names like Sagamore. The streets of San Francisco are just picturesque.

The new meanness says a lot about the social landscape, of course; about the fears it inspires and the dreams people have of the ways to survive in it. It has much to do with the amount of money to be made from drugs; with the mingling of politics and crime since Watergate, particularly Cuban politics in exile; with terrifying quantities of random and lethal craziness on the streets; with the sort of impatience with the law's delays which prompts Clint Eastwood and Charles Bronson movies. Yet Chandler's formula still serves us well, if not as a prescription, then as a pattern, a tune inviting variations. "Down these mean streets a man must go who is not himself mean . . .". If he is mean, he will need another claim on our interest, some sleazy charm or ribald pathology or a heart of gold hidden in the meanness. If he is not mean he will need, these days, some kind of safeguard against his own implausibility.

For what is both dated and attractive in Chandler's vision is not the crime in it - he names hold-ups, liquor rackets, the numbers, the mafia, crooked mayors, corrupt and political judges, shifty lawyers, stupid juries, gangsters who "rule nations and almost rule cities" - but the quiet outrage it contains. Chandler is talking tough, but he thinks he is exaggerating, and expects us to feel this, and to feel surprised. We have run out of surprise, we are all tough guys now, at least in our imagined knowledge of the world. Consequently, Chandler's antidote, his humane man, seems hopelessly romantic. He is "neither tarnished nor afraid . . . a complete man and a common man and yet an unusual man . . . a man of honour . . . He must be the best man in his world and a good enough man for any world . . .".

Elmore Leonard's characters are usually tarnished and afraid, but pretty good at surviving. In his recent work Leonard seems to be evolving a new, hardened version of Chandler's

hero, a man who is tough, even a killer, when his choices are confined, but not mean; a man who can be very mean indeed when he wants but remains honourable, a better man than most words reserve. This is not an easy figure to draw convincingly, and it is a measure of Leonard's considerable talent that he brings it off. Leonard has been much praised in the United States, and sells hugely, deservedly so. Eight of his novels are now newly published or republished in Britain, and another is apparently on the way. Some of them are recent - *Cat Chaser*, 1982, *Sticks* and *LaBrava* 1983, *Glitz*, 1985 - while others go back to 1974 and 1976.

Leonard has been writing novels and screenplays, thrillers and westerns since 1967. He was born in 1925, served in the US Navy and worked in advertising. The writing of westerns may have helped him on his way to his laconic dialogue, all slang and silences, endlessly oblique. In *Glitz*, a cop in Atlantic City gets shot at while in bed with a girl, and gives chase:

"I ran outside in my underwear, got my gun, I'm coming back in and a drunk is standing there on the sidewalk looking at me, weaving. You know what he said?"

"Atlantic City, three o'clock in the morning," Dixie said. "Resorts International across the street, he told you don't do it, it ain't worth it. Think of your wife and kids."

"He said, 'You should a bet your underwear. You never know when your luck'll change.'"

But blossoms of rhetoric also flourish in this packed prose. The cop who was shot at arranges for one mafioso, on the basis of misleading information, to kill another, to the delight of most of the population. The cop says, modestly, "Wonderful things can happen when you plant seeds of distrust in a garden of assholes." His friend says, "Wait, I want to write that down." Leonard's characters, good and bad, say things like, "What's your game?" or "You'll be all right, kid," not because they talk like that but because they have always wanted to talk like a movie. When a Latin type does a bit of heavy breathing he does it in full-dress cliché, squinting eyes and lines around his nostrils. "This was to indicate," the man watching him assumes, "nerves of ice banking the Latin fire inside."

The fast, self-aware language reflects a fast and crowded world, a world so full of things and people and action that it makes almost any other thriller kingdom seem underpopulated. All the cars are dated and named, the Camero, the Nova, the yellow 1977 Olds; all the guns and the drinks identified, every last frill and cocktail lounge furnishing noted. The effect is not that of a documentary, although, without doubt, the details are right, but of a baroque profusion, a world full of glittering, pointless toys - dangerous toys, or toys for dangerous people. We know how Colombian cocaine money is laundered, how casinos are monitored, how gambling managers lose their licences; who sleeps on which waterbed, and what the girls round the pool do for a living when they are not falling into bed with the guys round the pool. Above all we know, or gradually learn, who is double-crossing whom, since that is what this world is largely about. Some readers have felt that Leonard's plots are too complicated, a form of writerly self-indulgence. I think not, partly because I don't think a plot can be too complicated (I treasure the, no doubt apocryphal, story of Chandler, during the filming of *The Big Sleep*, unable to explain his plot to Howard Hawks), and partly because this complication is Leonard's great subject.

All these novels portray people, central or marginal, heroes or hangers-on, who are watching for an angle, trying to find their fortune in other people's messes. Of any situation they do not ask, is it good or bad, is it safe or dangerous? But, how will it play, what's my next move? They are not all black-and-white, but none of them can resist the thought of their cut, their place of the action that as yet is only a handful of compromising cards, waiting to be shuffled and dealt. The good guys stay at the thought, but even they have the thought. One character is asked to sit back and permit the killing of his mistress's bilious husband (former police chief in the Dominican Republic, famous for sewing people's eyelids to their eyeballs and shining harsh light on them), and then he can just walk off into the sunset with his girl. "Moran actually saw a picture of a red sunset, sky-red night . . .". Another good guy

roughs up an Italian mobster who has been gathering protection money and finds himself with \$12,000 on his hands. He can't keep it and he can't return it. He doesn't want, yet, to hand it in to the police. So he uses it as a deposit in a fancy hotel, which is happy to provide any kind of complimentary service (room, drinks, credit, transport, girls) for such a nice rich man.

What all this angle-seeking means is that Leonard's fiction is full of losers, people who think they are smart and aren't. His survivors are sometimes a little smarter, sometimes just lucky, sometimes ruthless. In *Sving* two rather forlorn robbers get deeper and deeper into double-cross trouble - there is a grim comedy in the scene where one of the robbers is held up by casual muggers and finds himself, desperate, having to shoot them both - but manage against the odds to keep afloat. *Cat Chaser* has an ex-cop and an ex-actor and a Dominican pimp all trying to get their hands on the same stack of money, and pretending to collaborate, while George Moran, the novel's good guy, tries to keep true love going amid all the roughing up and conspiracy. There are one or two of Leonard's rare false notes here ("all that longing they could now release", "They talked . . . and were at ease with each other in silence"). Tenderness he can't do. But loyalty and courage he can, and straightness when everything else looks bent. George feels sorry for the losers around him: he sees their game but lets them play until they play too rough. The death of Rafi, the Dominican pimp, horrifies George and is peculiarly and quietly scarifying. In a novel full of gunshots and crazy Cubans trying to take away a fellow's manhood with the garden shears, Rafi, who can't swim, is simply pushed into a pool on left; a loser who lacked a very simple survival skill. What was he doing in a realm of sharks? When George kills the scheming ex-cop, not to save his life, but to avenge his girl's money - or not even the money, but just the principle that you don't have to give things to people who think they are tougher than you are - the effect is shocking but feels right. George is not Chandler's hero, but he is ours. He has broken out of the prison of meekness, he has done it for the girl, he has not turned into a thug, and he will probably serve time for manslaughter.

Glitz seems to me the most complex and risky of these novels. It has many threads of plot, and some strange, understated motivations which hover between the not quite plausible and the genuinely incomprehensible - just where we find so much actual behaviour, in fact, but where novelists are reluctant to go. Vincent Mora, a Miami Beach cop who has been wounded, convalesces in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and meets a psychopath he put away for seven years in the Florida State penitentiary. We see the psychopath from inside, follow the horrors of his thought without comment, the sheer levity in them making the horror really quite extreme. He tips a drugged girl from a high balcony to her death and assesses her fall as if it were a competition dive: "Nice execution, but 'ey, she didn't keep her feet together." He is out to get Vincent, but not before tormenting him; Vincent wants to know who killed the girl, although Atlantic City is not his beat, and we are soon in the thick of cocaine, illegal gambling, murder, protection, a whirl of fear and vice which makes Miami, as Vincent thinks, look like a retirement home.

But Vincent, like George, stays straight, and what makes him credible, a man of honour in a world that is not even dishonoured because it has forgotten what honour is, is the fact that he has company - not much but some; decency is rare but not extinct, or alive only in our hero. That, and the fact that most people in the novel can't fathom him at all. He won't take bribes, won't arrange for the psychopath to die in an "accident" - even though he knows this charming type has killed three people in three weeks. Vincent's theory is that if you scare people enough you won't have to kill them. This theory works for much of the book, but it didn't stop him from getting wounded in the first place, and it gets him into near-terminal trouble at the end. This is what thrillers are always telling us, this is the smart, and belief they offer, although not often with the swish and flair of Elmore Leonard: that a man who's good enough for any world is ready for the next world.

The comeback of the hardback

John Sutherland

Something extraordinary is happening with American bestsellers. Up until quite recently, it was assumed on sound observable evidence that the book of the future was the mass market paperback. The hard-cover novel (particularly) would go the obvious way of the fountain pen, the button fly and the 78 rpm record. This expectation was confirmed in the mid-1970s by a cluster of blockbusters such as *Jaws*, *The Godfather* and *The Thornbirds*, which, boosted by movie or mini-series tie-ins, sold an unprecedented 10 million or more copies in American soft-cover form. At the same period hitherto unheard-of sums were extorted at paperback auctions for the season's lead titles (over \$3 million for the reprint rights of Judith Krantz's 1980 romance, *Princess Daisy*, for example). The average reader of the future would not, it was assumed, pay exorbitant hardback prices. The most that could be expected was that he would shell out, for the paperback book, roughly what it cost to see the film of the book at a cinema. Libraries, intellectuals and a few eccentric millionaires might keep the hardback novel going; but essentially it was an idea whose time had passed.

Not only has the American hard-cover novel survived its obituaries, it has in the past two years achieved unprecedented levels of unit sale. And this despite a cover price that has outstripped the rate of general inflation. To take some examples: ten years ago, in 1976, only two fiction bestsellers in America were recorded as selling over 200,000 copies in first form (then costing around \$10). This year, with sales still roaring ahead, Stephen King's *It* (\$22.95) began with a first printing of 800,000 and nine weeks after publication had 1.2 million copies in print. By the time it fades from the bestseller lists it should have chalked up close to two million sales in hardback. At the moment *It* still occupies first or second place, depending on which weekly list you follow. *It*'s main rival, *Whirlwind*, by James Clavell, kicked off with an 850,000 first printing. The book's hardback publisher, Morrow, paid a record \$5 million (\$2 million over the agent's posted minimum bid) at auction for this hard-cover rights, which looks, as things now stand, like a reasonably sound investment. (Viking gave \$3 million for *It*.) On present form Clavell's novel should sell well over 1.5 million in the American market in its expensive (\$22.95) form. Last year Jean M. Auel's *The Mammoth Hunters* began with a million-copy first printing. The novel subsequently remained forty-four weeks on the bestseller lists. It was one of the three 1985 works of fiction which broke the six-figure mark before going into paperback. The other two were James Michener's *Texas* and Garrison Keillor's charmingly opposite story of small-town life, *Lake Wobegon Days*. Herman Wouk's *Inside, Outside*, which straggled in at fifteenth place in 1985, sold 50,000 copies more than the No 1 title of 1976, *Regime*.

Of course bestsellers are always breaking their own artificial records just as soap powders always find new miracle ingredients. But, type apart, these new waves of hardback book sale, doubled over two years, quintupled over ten, represent something genuinely new and culturally significant. Stephen King, for example, is currently the most bankable name in bestselling fiction, and has been since the publication of *Carrie* in 1974. Part of King's blue-chip value to the book trade is his consistency. With the efficiency of a rolling steel mill he produces vast amounts of high-grade brand-name horror very fast. Uniquely, he had two titles in the 1983 bestseller list: *Christine* and *Reptile*. But together, over the whole of the year, these two titles did not sell as much as *Carrie* in two months. The same is true for Clavell. His last novel, *Noble House*, was the No 3 title in 1981, and was recorded as selling 500,000 in its year of publication. Even if it only clears its first printing, which it will, *Whirlwind* must, and up way ahead of that mark. This is not down to the authors - even though King has improved immeasurably as a novelist in the best few years (Clavell hasn't). It is a function of the bestseller machine which they feed and which has changed profoundly. The hard-cover boom is not restricted to the novel. The current No 1 non-fiction title, Kitty

Kelley's tacky "unauthorized" biography of Frank Sinatra, *His Way* (\$21.95), had 900,000 copies in print in its first three weeks. And the biggest non-fiction title of 1986, the comedian Bill Cosby's anecdotal *Fatherhood* (\$14.95), had 2 million copies in print in its first twenty weeks of publication - making it, one is told, the bestselling hard-cover book ever.

Whatever else, it's clear that two or three times as many Americans as used to be the case are buying the book of the season straight off in expensive hardback. Why? Whatever happened to the notorious sales resistance that made it so much harder to buy a new book than the equally expensive bottle of scotch or theatre ticket? One answer is that Americans are currently in the throes of a reckless spending spree in which old patterns of customer caution have been thrown to the wind. Producers are making the most of this mood. Thus the Bruce Springsteen *Live 1975/85* album, which retails at \$19, had a first pressing of 1.7 million. Ten years ago, the notion of a five-record set for anything other than the handful of American Wagnettes would have seemed commercial suicide. Now the suppliers can't get *Live 1975/85* off the trucks and into the shops fast enough to keep angry mobs from forming. The set went platinum (that's to say, sales of 1 million plus) in a week.

The public's open-handedness is a contributory factor. But the underlying reason for the resurrection of the American hardback is to be found in the structural changes in American book production and merchandising which have occurred in the past five years - notably, the dominant position which the four main bookstore "chains" have come to occupy. The market leader among the chains is Waldenbooks (an outfit that would have given Thoreau no pleasure). Waldenbooks has just celebrated the opening of its 1,000th outlet. It is closely trailed by B. Dalton, Barnes and Noble, and Crown. Unimpeded by any Net Book Agreement, these chains have embarked on a savage discounting war among themselves. Crown, for instance, never prints its name without the tag, "If you paid full price, you didn't buy it at Crown Books". Discounts of up to 40 per cent are offered on the thirty books currently featured in the *New York Times Book Review* bestseller lists. And it is the four chains which clear the massive printings of current bestsellers. Waldenbooks, by general agreement the hardest-nosed, took just under a third of the initial printings of *It* and *Whirlwind* at one go. The company retails its massive inventory by aggressive aboof-floor display (for which the publisher pays weekly rent) and lavish advertising (whose expense the publisher is obliged to share).

The whopping discounts available to the consumer work two ways. First, on the level of psychology, they provide the happy-hour illusion that he's getting a terrific bargain. Forty per cent off the price of any pleasure is a potent disincentive. Second, the hardback book really is a bargain. The average cost of a novel in 1986 is \$16, which can be reduced to as little as \$9.60 in the chain store. The paperback version, by the time you've waited two years, will probably cost well over \$5, and much less inviting discounts are made for this form. All this erodes the old 4-to-1 price ratio between hardback and paperback book (which Britain retains) to the point where impulse buying takes over. Moreover, discounts make the book competitive with the book clubs, but without the irritating restriction on choice and the obligation to take more books (often old books) than one wants.

The new vitality in the bookstore sector is one means by which the American book trade has made the hard-cover bestseller viable. Another is bulk for bulk. The immediately striking feature in the new generation of bestsellers is how physically massive they are. *It*, for instance, has 1,138 pages and weighs close on 4lb. *Whirlwind* has closer type and comes in at 1,147 pages and around three-quarters of a million words, as I calculate. Tom Clancy's *Red Storm Rising* runs to 652 pages. Last year, Michener's *Texas* was a kilo-page blockbuster, which added Michener for the top position, weighed in at a mimetically mammoth 654 pages. The trend is less pronounced in non-fiction. But *His Way* is a meaty 575 pages (or about four diaries of an Edwardian lady).

With discounted prices, what you get when you buy *It*, *Whirlwind* or *Texas* from a chain is, roughly, a hundred honest printed pages for a dollar. At a normal rate of consumption your \$15 will furnish around twenty-five hours' reading pleasure. By any standard, this is good value. Any one of the Booker shortlist costs, as I estimate, about six times as much per page and even more per word.

The girth and bulk of the current bestsellers reflect new patterns of reading. *Whirlwind* is not a book you'd pop in your brief-case unless you wanted a right arm like Arnold Schwarzenegger's ("You've read the book you couldn't put down. Now read the book you can't pick up"). Nor are these beach books, airport lounge books or handbag books. Like Bibles or television sets, they belong in the home and witness to a general revival of bedtime or evening leisure reading. Together with the universal spread of the VCR, the growth of the electronic ministries which bring pulp to hearth, and the yuppie baby boom, the new thousand-page bestseller attests to the reinstallation of the American living-room as the centre of the entertainment industry.

The new domesticity is confirmed by a palpable decline of the direct movie tie-in. Until a couple of years ago the dominant synergism in American culture was between the paperback and big-budget movie. This interdependence reached a peak of idiocy with the "chlidit" (comic for adults) No 1 fiction bestseller of 1982, *ET: The Extraterrestrial Storybook*, a work which makes one blush for the American reading public.

The book-to-movie, movie-to-book tie-in no longer rules as it used to. It is true that Stephen King currently has a film on general release (*Stand by Me*, Rob Reiner's sensitive adaptation of King's novella *The Body*). But he hasn't had a big-budget tie-in since *Christine*, a good film by John Carpenter, which didn't do all that well. Clavell, on the other hand, made his name known to the general American public with a highly successful television mini-series of *Shogun*. And his first and best novel, *King Rat*, is soon to have the same treatment; as - doubtless - will *Whirlwind* when a network production company can raise enough millions for the rights. Bill Cosby's intimate connection with television is even more striking. His No 1 ranked programme, *The Cosby Show*, is a celebration of the cosy "Leava it to Beaver" American family, with the difference that the principal characters are black. The series asserts there is such a thing as a normal, middle-class black family, with role-model fathers, career-oriented mothers and exactly the same quiet desperations and comic crises as their white counterparts. The programme, aided by Cosby's understated drollery, has been phenomenally and deservedly successful. In November 1986 it was auctioned to the television industry, with minimum bids set at \$150,000 per channel per week. The sale should yield Cosby's production and syndication company half a billion dollars for the season's run.

Artistry is not the first consideration with bestsellers. But one can legitimately ask what the Tolstoyan expanses now available mean for the novelist. Previously, producers of overweight popular fiction like Irving Stone merely resorted to flatulent overwriting to pack the pages, or bundled together lots of little stories against a vast geographical-historical scenery, like James Michener. Other simple strategies for enlargement have always been to hand. Jackie Collins, for instance, in her latest blockbuster, *Hollywood Husbands*, chronicles the love affairs of a New York model, Jade Johnson, with three West Coast studs, thus enabling three times the amount (544 pages) of the same old garbage to be churned out. Collins probably borrowed this threefold technique from her fellow-countrywoman Shirley Conran's similarly multi-plotted *Lace*.

One never has to look very hard in the lists for staleness and unoriginality. But there is evidence that the great open spaces of the new bestseller have inspired more ambitious popular novelists to chance their arms with the epic and panoramic narrative forms denied their "literary" colleagues, on economic grounds. Herman Wouk's *Winds of War* sequence is a useful instance. No lately profitable literary novelist could have demanded from his publisher 2,500 pages on which to sketch in the

sceptre

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PAPERBACKS

whole of the Second World War as the backdrop to an adulatory. In *The Mammoth Hunters* Jean M. Auel similarly sets her romantic drama against an encyclopaedic depiction of man's evolutionary emergence from the primeval cave. Her luscious Cro-Magnon heroine, Ayla, introduces emergent mankind to technology. *The Mammoth Hunters* ends up a deliciously quaint censure of the Flintstones and *Pronounced Unbound*. But with all its silliness, Auel's fiction has a gigantic scale that, for instance, Golding might have liked for *The Inheritors*. *Red Storm Rising* is the second novel of a new series, Tom Clancy. Clancy's previous book, *The Hunt for Red October*, got a useful break in February 1985 when President Reagan revealed that it was his, Nancy's and the White House staff's favourite yarn. (In the early 1980s, James Bond profited immensely from Kennedy's unsolicited endorsement.) Clancy's new hook chronicles a Third World War precipitated, inevitably, by Arab terrorists. Hostilities never get beyond conventional weaponry, and after much global fencing the Empire of Evil is confounded. *Whirlwind* is a geopolitical fiction about the two weeks following the Shah of Iran's abdication. It will, of course, have nothing from recent political disclosures about Washington's secret diplomacy initiatives. But I doubt that bona fide historians (or even Jimmy Carter in his memoirs) will be allowed as much space in print as Clavell has to deal with this crisis. King's *It* follows the intertwined careers of half a dozen citizens of a small Maine town, hampered as they are by a not quite exorcized entity first encountered in childhood. As with his smaller-scale effort, *The Body*, King's narrative flits from the centre of consciousness to another, creating the oceanic streamlining to which he's becoming increasingly proficient. The comically grandest effort of 1986 comes as a last gasp from L. Ron Hubbard, who at the end of his life mysteriously began issuing a sequence of space operas of immense length, all dealing with the future destiny of earth and

its earthlings. Mercifully the ancient huckster is dead, leaving the latest instalment, *Fortune of Fear*, the saga of Countess Krak of Volter, as his literary testament. Presumably the fact that it's prescribed reading for scientists explains its current presence in the bestseller lists.

Whatever their limitations, these novels are willing enough to tackle unusually large and intractable narrative subjects. And (in the case of Clancy and King, at least) they do it with some skill.

From year to year, the American bestseller lists comprise about 90 per cent old friends (brand-name authors, familiar categories) and about 10 per cent brash newcomers. The novelty, if it has staying power, duly becomes a fixture. Non-fiction's 90 per cent has traditionally been made up by how-to books, cookbooks, fitness and fatness books, inspiration (ie, spiritual wellness) books and pet books. In this setting, the 1985 triumph of Lee Iacocca's immodestly titled *Iacocca* was a happy innovation. The Chrysler tycoon's advertisement for himself and his ruthless style of entrepreneurship sold a million hardback copies in two months and was closely followed in the lists by *Yeager*. This other autobiography, by the nation's foremost test-pilot, was a better book about a nicer man and a more worthwhile American hero. *Iacocca* and *Yeager*, together with advance interest in doomed Ruck Hudson's confessions, provoked a tidal wave of autobiography in 1986. This year half the current list is made up of American modern heroes, heroines and villains writing about themselves. They include *One More Time* by Carol Burnett (female comedian); *Dancing on my Grave* by Gelsey Kirkland (ballerina); *McMahon!* by Jim McMahon (Chicago Bears quarterback); *Dreamgirl* by Mary Wilson (the other Mary Wilson, former singer with the Supremes); *Snake* by Ken Stabler (Oakland Raiders quarterback); *I, Tina* by Tina Turner (rock-singer and battered wife). So much egocentrically makes very tedious reading and it

is possible that the style has already worn itself out. Even after reputedly spending a million dollars on boosting his autobiography, Victor Kiam was unable to get his autobiography *Going My Way* on to the lists. Probably he will continue serializing it in his Remington television ads.

Certainly the most startling novelty in fiction bestsellers of the past few years was Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*. Granted the public is fickle, but who would have thought they would have flocked to buy the super-subtle inscriptions of a post-structuralist, Englished from the Italian? Loath to miss out on a proven good thing, the American book trade has put its selling muscle this year behind *Perfume* by Patrick Süskind, translated from the German. The novel sells well for Knopf at a relatively modest \$16.95. And it may be that there will be a permanent niche in the lists for the arty foreign article just as there is an Agatha Christie slot for ultra-English crime writers, currently occupied by P. D. James's *A Taste for Death*.

The British book trade which breeds writers like P. D. James has never shown the same relish for the bestseller system as its American counterpart. Doubtless the British publisher looks with some envy at the dizzying millions clocked up by transatlantic bestsellers. But if he's honest he knows that (even scaled down 75 per cent for the smaller population) such sales are unattainable here. Nor, probably, would he really want American-style bestsellerism, for the same reason that British managers don't want Japanese production figures, knowing that to achieve them a painfully Japanese way of business would also have to be adopted.

In fact, the British system, at least as regards its book trade, does very well without sales of a quarter of a million for hardback novels. Britain actually produces more titles per year than the United States, and exports considerably more to both the developed and the underdeveloped worlds. Given that the population of Britain is a quarter of that of America, the British book trade's performance

is truly heroic, especially as the population is less broadly educated than the American and certainly less interested in buying hardback books when they can be borrowed conveniently from the nearby public library. A 1986 survey by *Publishing News* discovered (or confirmed the known fact) that 20 per cent of Britons never buy a book, and 35 per cent had not bought one in the past year.

It used to be the case that a bestseller which hit the jockpot in both countries would sell about ten times as many copies in the United States as here. *The Name of the Rose* duly cleared 300,000 for Harcourt Brace Jovanovich in the United States and 35,000 in the United Kingdom for Secker and Warburg. This year, the disproportion has probably skewed even further. The British hardback publisher will not, one can be reasonably sure, sell 100,000 copies of *It* in two months. Nor do we have a bookshop system to handle such a volume of sales even if the demand existed. There is, in Britain, nothing equivalent to the major American chains. There is not always a bean, of course, W. H. Smith's. But Smith's has never been primarily a bookshop and never less so than in the past twenty years.

With the obstacles of retail price maintenance it is unlikely that the American book chains would be tempted to expand into Britain, as the American book clubs have. Nor is there any future for British imitators, until the NBA is abolished. If he had had the ear of the Prime Minister longer, Jeffrey Archer might have done something to "free" the British book trade from its uncompetitive ways. As it is, he and the other British writers who enjoy superseller status in the United States will have to put up in their own country with being no better than some other author chaps.

Whirlwind by James Clavell and *It* by Stephen King are reviewed on page 1368 of this issue, along with *A Matter of Honour* by Jeffrey Archer.

giant bookselling chain, B. Dalton. The three were the first volumes of a projected decalogy: *The Invaders Plan* and its sequels revive at inordinate length the thick-eared pleasures of the American pulp magazines of the 1930s, where Hubbard learned his craft. His publicist quote four paragraphs to entice us:

W H A P I
The blast shot was right where my head had been! The heavy concussion blew the fire out totally! Believe me, I scrambled!

The fact that there is purpose-built bestselling SF, that work of large-scale mass appeal has been stimulated in a genre which was once seen as coterie fiction, even as an eccentricity, is evidence of a process of simplification that one would have thought as foreign to the genre as nostalgia. Ambition, in specific cases, has been lowered, repetition encouraged, and commercially unpredictable novelty minimized. Certainly the films of Steven Spielberg and George Lucas - skilful reductions of SF to the evocation of childlike wonder at special effects - have had their influence.

Not all bestselling SF authors apprehend a common denominator as mean, not to say morose, as Hubbard did, though most of them do offer to simplify the world for us. Issuing complacent communiqués from inside their personal imaginary universes, Heinlein and Asimov have sunk below the event horizons of their own *oeuvre*. Clarke's view of the human condition, as a body of technical problems surrounded by a residue of inconsolable regret, is at least based on a shrewd assessment of his narrative rage, and gives rise to some pleasant elegiac meditations. Other international bestsellers in SF include Anne McCaffrey, whose *Dragon* books are fairy-tales in flimsy disguise for readers who believe life would be improved by a dose of good old-fashioned sentimentality, and Douglas Adams, whose urbane *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (now available in an omnibus volume, "A Trilogy in Four Parts", 590pp, Heinemann, £9.95, 0 434 00920 2) applies the comic relief of *reductio ad absurdum* to the whole of space and time.

The most remarkable exception to the rule seems to be Frank Herbert, who was persuaded to clone his cult novel *Dune* first to a trilogy, and then to a series of six volumes, in which, as C. N. Manlove has politely observed, "the themes of *Dune* are considerably expanded and modified, if without its drama". Herbert's chronicle of decadent galactic imperialism concentrates exclusively on courtly, clerical and commercial intrigue, spinning paranoiacally aggrandized webs of intellection, re-complicated by extra-sensory perception, genetic interference and the proliferation of secret codes and conspiracies. "The reader," says Manlove, "is often faced by life reduced to a subtle chess game of which he has lost track of the moves." Herbert is an improbable bestseller, whose mesmeric fascination his readers seem unable to explain.

Conceived in retrospection, nurtured with intensive care, bestselling SF seems to exist in isolation, from the rest of the field and the rest of the world. In British paperback editions Ursula Le Guin, Philip Jose Farmer and Philip K. Dick do well for Grafton Books, but not half as well as Asimov and Clarke. In an article on the economics of publishing SF, Malcolm Edwards remarked that "a gulf has developed between the superlatum and the rest which many publishers find hard to bridge". As the SF editor for Gollancz, however, Edwards has also said that it is only the guaranteed sales of Frank Herbert and Larry Niven in hardback that permit him to publish unknown and unpublishing writers at all. The same effect has made radical, iconoclastic SF viable for the Women's Press. Joanna Russ's established reputation and accumulated fame have enabled them to sell 14,000 paperback copies of her novel *The Female Man* in a year and a half, and at the same time 11,000 of *The Planet Dwellers*, a first novel by the illustrator Jane Palmer. It seems, in the ecology of SF publishing, that however intelligent, inventive and sharp-toothed the emergent small mammals, they are wholly dependent on the lumbering dinosaurs to go before and break the ground.

Verbal subversions

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Consulting Roger under the friendly Prospective Affections, Evelyn Whugh's Major Ludovic finds: "Cowardice, pusillanimity, poltroonery, dastardness, nbject fear, funk, dunghillcock, colstrial, nidget, Bob Acres, Jerry Sneak." Looking up *colstrial* in the dictionary he finds "a groom, a knave, a base fellow" and the quotation "the swarming ribble of our colstrell carter". This phrase, once found, is too good not to use, but how does one use it? Applying it to a recent military intake, he is not once suspected of madness by his second-in-command. It is a just suspicion. People who use a thesaurus to find the *most* thoroughly *juste* are probably mad to begin with, but thesauromania leads to taking off in a word balloon, the heavier holding the gasbag to hard reality severed.

Jonathan Green's compilation provokes a more dangerous kind of madness than Roger's. Under Disorder he gives us "Chinese fire drill, dog's dinner, grunge, Horlicks (UK upperclass), pig's ear, pit, (right) two-and-eight (rhym. sl. = state), scrunge, schmutz, what the cat brought in". These slang terms never had much of a hold on reality. When Carl Sandburg called slang "a language that rolls up its sleeves, spits on its hands and goes to work" he was being exemplarily inept. Slang shirks rather than works, encapsulates bloody-mindedness, avoids exact denotation, is a kind of vague poetry quickly outdated, the voice of whingeing subversiveness. Nobody knows the etymology of *slang*, but it suggests *slang*, the throwing of a noise or a far-fetched metaphor into the air, like muck off a shovel. It rolls up its sleeves and spits on its hands, casts dirt to justify leaning on its shovel, waits for the tea-break.

Nobody doubts that we need slang dictionaries, chiefly to find out the meaning of what is already demoded. On one of my rare visits to London a year or so ago I saw on a hoarding "Milk Delivers Bottle". I did not know the meaning of the term. I had known *bottle* in "bottle and glass", signifying *arse*, but this was clearly something different. When it had got into the slang glossaries with the Milk Marketing Board's usage that usage was already old. An actor of the Royal Shakespeare Company told me that he was glad to see I was still working, which I took, offended, to mean masochism, but he meant being lazy, meaning not being lazy. One cannot keep up with slang, especially the slang of the young, which is designed to be unintelligible to adults and, once decoded, has passed into history, or, since today's young reject history, has turned into vapour or unspeak. Still, one accepts Partridge's great dictionary as a record of the various ephemeral modes in which underdogs, public schoolboys, prostitutes, thieves and obnoxious have affirmed group solidarity or, overwhelmingly, the put-upon have responded to being put upon. It is social more than lexical history, affirming the need to debate or distort the language of the establishment to the end of denying the establishment's values. Slang changes with bewildering swiftness, but it is always recognizable as slang.

Do we need a thesaurus of it? Green has already done good work as a slang lexicographer, holding fast to the delimitation put forward by J. Y. T. Greig in 1938: "The chief stimuli of slang are sex, money and intoxicating liquor" (to which we must now add drugs). His aim in this compilation is, using the Roget taxonomy, to show us how to slangify more general concepts, though Greig's categories predominate. There are a great number of slang terms for the genitalia, the sexual act, sexual perversion or inversion or permissible variation, for booze and for money. Thus, to think is to "bend one's elbow, booze"; it up, "chug, chug-a-lug, crack a bottle, - tube (Aus.), - tube (US), - the snoot, farm, gangle, get a load on, get a stoolful, get an edge on, - one's nose pointed, - one going, hit the booze, - the bottle, - the lug, - the sauce, hoist one, inhale (a word), irrigate the tonilla, knock (one) back, - it around, - it up, oil the tonilla, put one's foot back, and so on. The question is, having

being introduced to this plethora, what does one do with it? If one is a novelist, one must be grateful for the chance to give the look of authenticity to low-life dialogue, but there is the problem of verifying location, trade, period. Register is a very delicate consideration in the employment of slang, and Green can give us no help there.

A subcategory unknown to Roget is television. Who calls a television set a custard and jelly (rhyming slang for telly) or a Nervo and Knox (box)? We can guess, though I still have to have this confirmed, that the idiot-board (cue board) and the idiot-girl (cue-board operator) belong to the studios, as do Acton Hilton (BBC rehearsal studios) and the mug-book (casting directory). But to whom is a religious programme a God-slot and a director a lenser or megger? Since we cannot define the areas of usage we are tempted to throw the whole lot on to the page or into the air in the form of a Rabelaisian catalogue. "He kicked him up the blot or brown-eye or cornhole or dirt chute or gazoo or dinger or elephant and castle or helnic or kab edis or labonza" and so on for a whole page. Or "Ha fondled her apples, bazooms, brace and bits, BSHs, cats and kitties, charlies, cupcakes, gazunkus, norks, pumps or wallpoies" for at least a column.

The disposition of derivative or cynical low-life terms into the Roget format does at least show how little slang is capable of dealing with faith, hope and charity. A religious person is a bible-banger, bible-puncher or Holy Joe. A church is a Godbox and Christ has H, as a middle initial. There is little hope anywhere. To be in love is to be stuck on, go for, have a thing for or eyes for (US black) one's nose open for the beloved. Something beautiful is cutie or a dreamboat or a corker, daisy, dish, eyeful, hot stuff, looker, nifty, peach, pip, spanker, stunner, sweetie. To learn slang thus is to learn a limitation of the nobler faculties. The whole book proposes modes of dehumanization,

though with no sinister intent. If we want to translate the elevated or the merely neutral into the colourful animalistic, here is how to do it. The question is whether we want to do it.

For slang derives directly from a situation; it cannot be frigidly applied from without. You have to be pretty far gone in homosexual public lavatory soliciting to know about having kidney trouble, or, when one has failed to hide one's homosexuality, to speak of wearing a cut-glass veil. We are, most of us, on the outside, watching other people's bunch punch or daisy-chain or gang-bang or group grope or sloppy seconds a girl moving from one partner to the next. There is altogether too much of the voyeur or the how-quaint slummer in such a compilation. However we use its terms, we shall always be using them in inverted commas.

This is not to denounce slang itself: far from it. It is good to know how much of it there is and to be able to admire its variety. I did not previously know that Australians with too many sexual partners speak of climbing trees to get away from it, or getting more use than a toilet seat, or having more priks than a second-hand dirtboard or being sn busy they have to put a mnn on tu help. Knowing this kind of thing - and Green admits to compiling his thesaurus for those who are curious or logophilic - is a very marginal accomplishment, like being able to fart "Aunie Laurie" through a keyhole. Either we learn slang in situation contexts, as many of us did in the armed forces, or we look it up, if the dictionary comes out quickly enough, when its use, in speech or journalism, hinders communication.

There are one or two marginal lessons that Green teaches, and one of them is the great truth that standard English has still to provide us with acceptable terms for the organs and processes of generation and excretion. There are so many slang expressions for the penis - steak, trumpet, blow aick, cannon, cherry splitter, dagger, nimrod, joy prong, mouse

mutton, IBM (itty bitty meat for a small penis) - that the catalogue looks like a search for a word that ought to exist but does not. The same is true of the female pudendum - fern, ha'penny, hide, jelly roll, moneyninker, ribbyfruit, you know where (very tame), cuffs and collars (public hair the same colour as head hair). The Latin terms smell of Lysol, but the slang words are so facetious that they continue to attach a sniggering kind of shame to parts which, though private, need a sober public nomenclature. Similarly there is a whole range of sexual activity which can either be named by translating Krafft-Ebing or handed over to the slangmongers. There is nothing in between. The sexual revolution has succeeded only in making general currency out of a secret nint.

Green's glossary of the so-called drug culture is horrifyingly fascinating. He teaches us that only is speed (Oliver Reed), Tuinal is a Christmas tree, an ab is an abscess caused by injecting, cotton is a cloth through which heroin is sucked into a syringe, and to shoot gravy, fire up, or jack off is to pump a mixture of blood and heroin into one's arm. Much, much more. His thesaurus is an index of what is going on in the world, and the rich underworld vocabularies are in earnest of the continuation of crime, prostitution and various kinds of slaughter. But the great truth is less the forms of slang than the need for it. Humanity is ungovernable and hates the language of conformity, since conformity has a whiff of the inhuman about it. Green has at least shown us, though without exact definition or historical pining, the range of slang in English. In effect, he makes a general statement: there is a lot of this kind of thing around. But to amass slang in a void is a useless activity. It is better to look meanings up, and Mr Green's admirable *Dictionary of Contemporary Slang*, along with the recently edited Partridge, is the place to do it. A treasury of slang has to be fairy gold.

Worlds of their own: the SF sequel

Colin Greenland

In *Trillion Year Spree*, their recent history of science fiction, Brian Aldiss and David Wingrove's chapter on the household names of the genre is called "How to be a Dinosaur: Seven survivors". It is apparent that the SF authors guaranteed a place on American and British bestseller lists - Isaac Asimov, Arthur C. Clarke, Robert Heinlein and others - are benefiting from the careful exploitation of reputations accumulated over the past forty years. "Over" rather than "during" those years, for the accumulation has not been steady. At the beginning of the current decade, Asimov and Clarke had each publicly retired from writing fiction, and Heinlein had not published a novel for seven years. The subsequent elevation of their careers to the Olympian altitude where publishers' advances and sales are both measured in millions is a feat of industry rather than literature. As Aldiss and Wingrove comment, Asimov, Clarke and Heinlein are now "brad names". As their books grow ever boxier, their cover designs ever simpler and more gaudy, they even begin to resemble packets of powdered soup or soup. Asimov's *Foundation and Earth* (464pp, Grafton, £10.95, 0 246 13047 4) looks rather like a pound of particularly sugary chocolates.

A brand name denotes a product, continuous not only in quality but also in kind and content. The careers of Asimov, Clarke and Heinlein have been relaunched by publishers keen to build on established success, who have drawn their authors' attention back to earlier works and have commissioned sequels, elaborations and revised versions. Nor did they overestimate the size of their audience in 1984. Two million copies of Clarke's *2010: Odyssey Two* were sold in the United States alone. It had taken a dozen years to sell the same number of copies of the first volume, *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Asimov had been collecting "increasing royalties" on his Foundation trilogy for twenty years when, in 1981, his publisher "told him

that [he] simply had to write another Foundation novel . . . 140,000 words long, twice that of any of the earlier volumes". The result remained on the *New York Times* best-seller list for six months.

The primary purpose of *2010*, or *Foundation's Edge*, or *The Number of the Beast*, is not to surprise, or even to satisfy, the conditioned reader, but to provide - and promise - the same again. The ideal series is, like a soap opera, unending. Even SF buffs now find it difficult to remember exactly how many volumes there are in the Dune or Foundation series. Harry Harrison, having seen the earliest signs of the success Brian Aldiss would have with his Helliconia trilogy, planned and executed the first volume of a projected bestselling sequence of his own, *West of Eden*. The intended series, claims Harrison's friend and sometime collaborator Leon Stover, of the Illinois Institute of Technology, "returns SF to the philosophical values of its classical origins in the scientific romances of H. G. Wells". But *West of Eden* has not sold anything like as well as Harrison's less edifying saga of Slippery Jim diGriz the Stainless Steel Rat, six books so far, of which Sphere Books have sold 600,000 in Britain alone in 1974. According to Stover, "public demand for more and more of it (and this is very real) keeps him from his growing philosophical concerns". Public demand may, indeed must, be "very real", but so is creative marketing, which is to say the invidious manipulation and inflation of public demand. Giant books, like giant vegetable marrow, require forcing.

More people can always be sold a product if they can be sure there is no risk involved in the purchase. Those who suppose that the purpose of SF is predictive should note the extent to which its most popular practitioners fulfil a largely nostalgic function for most of their readers. One week last May L. Ron Hubbard, another best-selling dindsaur (who thrives in the tall by marketing SF as religion, through the offices of his Church of Scientology), had three books in the top ten of the American

giant bookselling chain, B. Dalton. The three were the first volumes of a projected decalogy: *The Invaders Plan* and its sequels revive at inordinate length the thick-eared pleasures of the American pulp magazines of the 1930s, where Hubbard learned his craft. His publicist quote four paragraphs to entice us:

W H A P I
The blast shot was right where my head had been! The heavy concussion blew the fire out totally! Believe me, I scrambled!

The fact that there is purpose-built bestselling SF, that work of large-scale mass appeal has been stimulated in a genre which was once seen as coterie fiction, even as an eccentricity, is evidence of a process of simplification that one would have thought as foreign to the genre as nostalgia. Ambition, in specific cases, has been lowered, repetition encouraged, and commercially unpredictable novelty minimized. Certainly the films of Steven Spielberg and George Lucas - skilful reductions of SF to the evocation of childlike wonder at special effects - have had their influence.

Not all bestselling SF authors apprehend a common denominator as mean, not to say morose, as Hubbard did, though most of them do offer to simplify the world for us. Issuing complacent communiqués from inside their personal imaginary universes, Heinlein and Asimov have sunk below the event horizons of their own *oeuvre*. Clarke's view of the human condition, as a body of technical problems surrounded by a residue of inconsolable regret, is at least based on a shrewd assessment of his narrative rage, and gives rise to some pleasant elegiac meditations. Other international bestsellers in SF include Anne McCaffrey, whose *Dragon* books are fairy-tales in flimsy disguise for readers who believe life would be improved by a dose of good old-fashioned sentimentality, and Douglas Adams, whose urbane *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (now available in an omnibus volume, "A Trilogy in Four Parts", 590pp, Heinemann, £9.95, 0 434 00920 2) applies the comic relief of *reductio ad absurdum* to the whole of space and time.

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Remainders

Eric Korn

Failed ambition (in others) is a wondrously comforting thing. I have a large and impressive album of heavy, ceremonious Whatman paper, bound in pink calico, watermarked 1825. *Analytical Journal no 1* is the title, amended to *Analytical Journal A & Diary of Optional Pursuits*, amended to "call this Journal of History or Belles Lettres or whatever else I think ought to come first in the series". Then there is a transcript of some Mrs Hemans about exile, a poem called "Tomorrow" which is full of sanguine expectations, and a brief essay that ends with the probably heartfelt, certainly italicized: "idleness is the blight of genius and no idle man can ever become truly great".

The rest is silence. Silence and two hundred lone and level empty pages. Boundless, and bare.

* * *

Kindly man in Texas wants to help me operate more efficiently.

A few months back, it seems, he wrote offering to sell me some mingeins; *Mathematical Review*, Vols 3-48 for \$12,600, sixty-three years' subscription to *Physics Abstracts*, stuff like that. Probably a young guy working his way through college.

At the time I was still trying to decide between *Time Out* and *City Limits* and I let the opportunity slip. In regretful tone, restrained nobility, saintly really, he writes again: "Believe your busy schedule may have caused you to overlook a good opportunity." More tempting proposals, like 103 volumes of *Chemical Abstracts* (can you think of a nicer present for \$59,940?). Then: "we enclose a short questionnaire. Your completing and returning the form as soon as possible will enable both of us to operate more efficiently."

Well, you know me. My Nice Guy, I'd almost filled up the form before I began to speculate on the benefits to my business from filling this longish, difficultish form - only question I was sure I could answer was "Do you want to be on our mailing list?" - and sending it back to Texas.

I'm not certain what precise subspecies of double whammy this is, but I'm pretty sure it's the same one the British Museum is operating. Just outside the entrance, where some low-bred institutions might have turnstiles, BL has a genteel pair of collecting urns with the warcy "Keep the museum free, give generously".

* * *

As I may have remarked, I have enough trouble deciding whether *Time Out* or *City Limits* is the magazine for me, and I'm not helped in the least by having the data for an informed choice among 6,500 of the beastly, seductive, time-woracious things. Such, however, is what I am offered by Katz's and Katz's *Magazines for Libraries*, now in its fifth remorseless edition.

Katz and Katz (that's Bill and Linda Sternberg Katz, published by Bowker, pp xviii + 1094, £95 and was ever money better spent?) haven't, obviously, read through sixty-five hundred periodicals from *Cinemacabre* to *Muscle Development*. Of course not: they have read through sixty-five thousand; from *Thrust* to *Vibrant Life*; from *Siney* to *Sipap*; from *Tel Quel* to *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (I'll come back to that in a minute); from *Motherhood* to *National Hog Farmer*; from *Old West* to *New Albania*; from *CelebrAsian* to *EcGink*; from (I'm enjoying this) A+ to ETC; from (I can stop whenever I want) *The Journal of Presbytery History* to *Petersen's Pickups and Mudtrucks*; from *The Police Chief* to *Fluiter*; from (just a little one) *Yelmo* to *Yup*; from *Hanging Loose* to *Addictive Behavior*; from (I can't fight it any longer) *Alive* for young teens, *Archie's Pals and Gals*, *El Heroldo* de Brownsville, *High Technology*, *High Fidelity*, *High Times*, *Highlights for Children*, *Highway and Heavy Construction*, *Interface* (source of timely information on specialist libraries), *Interface Journal of New Music Research*, *Interface Age*, *Interfaces*, *Inter*.

Sorry about that. They've read all those magazines and then they have (pedantically speaking) designated

them. They have called on experts savvy enough to tell you which skydiving mug should be in every library and which is only for specialist parachuting collections; the twelve most significant Urban Studies periodicals; what to go for if your budget only runs to seventeen journals on management science; and the best source of information on cats, tri, and polynarans. The last one isn't too difficult really: there is just *Multihulls* ("the only periodical that offers diverse and thorough coverage of this hoating niche"), and their conclusions have a pleasantly pleonastic ring or rather ringing: "if there is a perceived demand for publications about multihulled boats, *Multihulls* should be given primary consideration".

They have a humbling bank of expertise. I have been mither preening myself for knowlege about comics ("sequential art" is the preferred term), despite not being a sequential artlover; I will for example pontificate about *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, a joke that incidentally got taken seriously and now serves as a sort of Caliban's mirror of the first edition market: as each new number hits the stands the previous issue quadruples in price and is declared rare. R. and K.'s Man on the Strip knows all about this, knew back last spring that Superman was going contemporary, knows all about the markets for *Heavy Metal*, *Love and Rockets*, *Care Bears* ("message of spreading happiness... aimed at children just beginning social contact") and *Katy Keene* ("for fashion-conscious children"). Their resident expert (we are told who he is and he lives in Culver City, Calif) is not so hot on British Comics, or maybe *Mammy*, *Dandy*, *Blandy* and the rest don't come up to snuff: though there is no excuse for omitting the hugely influential 2000 AD.

The signed reviews are enjoyably judgmental: the hefty philosophy section enthuses over *Praxis* ("as those who read the Serbo-Croatian will understand"), commends fifty others, faint-praises *Sophia* ("artisan-like, printed no doubt from a justified word-processing program") and damns *Mind* ("lost its grip"). *Topol* ("not enough for a steady diet, only a vitamin supplement") and *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* ("sad ending for a pioneer"). But there's no *Radical Philosophy* in this section, in fact no radical anything in the index except *Radical America*. There are no British computing magazines, except the academic *Computer Journal*; I started to wonder if Britain was underrepresented. But there stand *The British Journal of Aesthetics* and the *British Journal of Criminology*, *Punch* and *Country Life* and the *TLS* ("often witty and provocative letters to the editor").

Wading through the wetlands of single-author journals becomes an easy outing with an assertive local guide. Some writers are for all libraries: *The Blake Quarterly*, *The Keats-Shelley Journal*, *The James Joyce Review* ("the twentieth century's most important - if tedious - novelist"); Saul Bellow, Conrad, Dickens and Donne are amiable for medium-to-large institutions, while only the biggest and most specialized need to bother about Claudel or Hawthorne, *The Flannery O'Connor Bulletin*, or poor Emily Dickinson ("Somewhat insignificant despite its high cost").

Gender politics crowds the magazine racks. The section called "Men" contains nothing more than five Wild West Survivalist journals, a high-class rag-trade rag, *Playboy* ("gauche community needs and select accordingly"), *Hustler* ("halthy sexual attitudes"), and *Screw*. Women by contrast get pages and pages of stuff, all the way from *Barbie* and *Phygit* and *Big Beautiful Women* to *Hecate*, *Sinister Wisdom* and *Off Our Backs*. Not to be confused with *On Our Backs* in the "Lesbian and Gay" (didn't that use to be "Gay and Lesbian"? Or is it always ladies first?) category, which gets very positive treatment: "prove your commitment to intellectual freedom by subscribing to this daring magazine." The man who graded the *Singles* magazines had a lot less fun. "Best of its type in south central Texas" is but grudging praise of *Touch of Class* (San Antonio), especially when he adds "primarily of interest to middle-class yuppies". *Capital's Destiny* gets a dart square between the shoulder-blades: "from the looks of some of the photos, a person would have to be desperately unwell to resort to the *Destiny* League." Only *Living Single* in Columbus, Ohio, seems to

turn him on; "definitely one of the best... emphasis is on the glamour and excitement of single living. Articles on skiing, night life and exciting personalities exemplify the happiness that single life can hold...". If solitary night skiing with a bunch of exciting Ohioans isn't your bag, there's nothing left for you but *Lough*, *Poolfe*, *Minzle Blasts* and *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*.

* * *

I blame it all on Christo.

All this heavy wrapping, that's what. And now a loyal Green reader from Konstanz, a long-standing buttress (butter? but person? but?) Certainly not of this column writes to tell me that his *TLS* has started to come to him unbiodegradably shrink-wrapped, instead of in the traditional ecological roll, to tell me that he is not renewing, and to ask - question expecting the answer "no chance, squire" - if there is anything I can do about it. In Italy, he avers, even newstand periodicals now come in the kind of glassy

SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS ON

The *TLS* of December 7, 1911, carried a review by James R. Thursfield of *Julia Frankau's The Story of Emma, Lady Hamilton*, from which the following extracts are taken:

... the text itself is copiously illustrated with drawings in monochrome of places and personalities associated with Lady Hamilton, her husband, and her several lovers, including, of course, Nelson. On the whole we are tempted to say in time-honoured phrase of these rather ambitious but not entirely successful illustrations, especially those in colour, that for people who like this sort of thing, this is the sort of thing they will like. But such people will not be of the finest and most cultivated taste.

We are confirmed in this judgement by the text which Mrs Frankau has thought proper to associate with these illustrations. It purports to be "The Story of Emma, Lady Hamilton"; but it can only be properly so called if we take the word "story" in the sense in which we tell a story to children, not troubling ourselves over-

much about its accuracy, provided we can manage to arrest their attention by it. This particular story is not, of course, told for children - far from it - nor could it, in our judgement, be told, as Mrs Frankau has chosen to tell it, to any person of any age who, without being in any sense a Popsnap, retains any proper feeling of reticence and decorum... Mrs Frankau is a novelist of considerable ingenuity and repute.

There is not the least reason why she should not if she chooses write a novel founded partly on the authentic facts of Lady Hamilton's life and her relations with Nelson and others, and partly on the innumerable legends and fictions which have accumulated round her name and fame. But she should not call such a novel "a true and authentic account," nor pretend that she has anything in the nature of really "reliable evidence" for all that she says and much that she must have invented. As to the style and tone of the narrative, perhaps the least said is the best.

I have seen the future, and it is polyvinyl and binding.

AMONG THIS WEEK'S CONTRIBUTORS

R. W. Ashford is a lecturer at the Department of Parasitology of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. Gillian Avery's most recent novel for children, *A Likely Lad*, 1971, has recently been reissued in paperback. Warwick Bray is Reader in Latin American Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology at the University of London.

Anthony Burgess's most recent novel, *The Planets*, was published earlier this year. Glen Cavallaro is the author of *John Cowper Powys: Novelist*, 1973. His *A Reading of E. M. Forster* was published in 1979.

Maurice Cranston is Visiting Professor of Political Science at the University of California, San Diego. His *Jean-Jacques: The early life and work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau 1712-1754* was published in 1983.

Dick Davis is the Northern Arts Literary Fellow at the Universities of Newcastle and Durham. His *Wisdom and Wilderness: The achievement of Your Winters* was published in 1983.

Euan Dunn is no editor of *The Handbook of the Birds of Europe: The Middle East and North Africa, Volume Five: Larks to Thrushes*, which will be published next year.

Victoria Glendinning's *Vita: The life of V. Sackville-West* was published in 1983.

John Golding is a tutor in the Painting School of the Royal College of Art.

James Graham-Campbell is Reader in Medieval Archaeology at University College London. His *The Vikings* was published in 1980.

Colin Greenland's novel, *Daybreak on a Different Mountain*, was published in 1984.

Alethea Hayler's edition of De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* was published in 1971. She is editing the unpublished letters of James Russell Lowell.

Gertrude Himmelfarb's books include *The Idea of Poverty: England in the early Industrial Age*, 1984.

Tamar Jacoby is Deputy Editor of the Op-Ed page of the *New York Times*.

Eric Korn is an antiquarian bookseller in London.

Ruairi McLean's books include *The Thomas and Hudson Manual of Typography*, 1980.

Heinrich Meinel teaches English and American Studies at the University of East Anglia. Her *Emily Dickinson* has recently been published.

W.H.M. Makers's books include *Beach and the Dance of God*, 1980, and *Beethoven and the Voice of God*, 1983.

C. M. Perrine is the author of *Birds*, 1974.

Roy Porter is a lecturer at the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, London. His most recent book is *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 1982.

John Ransley's *The Agency: The rise and decline of the CIA* will be reviewed in a forthcoming issue of the *TLS*.

Michael Rast is Director of the British Archaeological Expedition to Bahrain and Director of the British School of Archaeology in Iraq. He is now Visiting Associate Professor at the University of California, Berkeley.

Michael Rosen is a lecturer in Philosophy at University College London. He is author of *Hegel's Dialectic and its Criticism*, 1982.

Michael Rosenthal is the author of *British Landscape Painting*, 1982, and *Consolation: The painter and his landscape*, 1983, which has just been reissued in paperback.

A. W. R. Simpson's *Cannibals and the Common Law* was published earlier this year.

Frances Spalding is the author of *Roger Fry: Art and Life*, 1981, and *Vanesa Bell*, 1983.

John Swales is Visiting Professor in the Division of Humanities, at the California Institute of Technology. His most recent book is *Offensive Literature*, 1982.

Nicholas Toller is a lecturer in Developmental Psychology at the University of Sussex.

Henry Wainman is a Fellow and Tutor in Modern History at New College, Oxford, and joint editor of the *English Historical Review*. He is the author of *The Tudor Regime*, 1979.

Dick Wilson is the author of *The Sun at Noon*, which was published earlier this year, and *Chion: The story of the island 1899-1970*, 1984. He lives in the Philippines and is writing a history of the Asian Development Bank.

Michael Woods's *America in the Movies: Or, 'Santa Moritz' Had Shipped My Mind* was published in 1975.

Letters

Georges Dumézil

Sir, - Ordinarily, it is on author's prerogative to counter criticism, especially vicious and unfounded criticism. However, as Georges Dumézil passed away on October 11 of this year, in his eighty-ninth year, it falls to us who knew him well to respond to the charges levelled by Bruce Lincoln in his recent review of *L'Oubli de l'homme et l'honneur des dieux: esquisses de mythologie* (October 3).

Taking his cue from the Italian historians Arnaldo Momigliano and Carlo Ginzburg, both of whom have accused Dumézil of being a Nazi sympathizer in the late 1930s, Lincoln implies that the French mythologist's initial conception of the tripartite Indo-European ideology was directly inspired by the authoritarian social order that had recently taken shape in Germany under Adolf Hitler. He also implies that Dumézil remained a crypto-Nazi until the end, despite various attempts to hide or obfuscate his past associations and beliefs.

These are serious charges, which, if substantiated, would vitiate much of Dumézil's sixty years of painstaking research into Indo-European mythic traditions. However, neither Lincoln nor the two Italian scholars whose conclusions he has chosen to grasp have any case whatsoever. They have come up with a farrago of innuendo, guilt by association and outright disavowal.

Let us begin by considering a case of innuendo. Lincoln cites a passage in *L'Oubli de l'homme* where Dumézil, in considering Herodotus' account of how the Persian King Darius and two colleagues debated the merits, respectively, of democracy, oligarchy and monarchy, makes reference to an incident that occurred in November 1918, just before the end of the First World War. It seems that Dumézil, at the time a twenty-year-old artillery officer, had a brief encounter with a German prisoner-of-war

when he learned that the Kaiser had fled to Holland, shouted "You - Republic, Emperor, King, Republic; we - Emperor." From this anecdote Lincoln deduces that Dumézil was then beginning an admirer of Teutonic militarism, and that his conception of the hierarchical structure of the Indo-European ideology is somehow coloured by that premeditated admiration. Needless to say, Lincoln misses the whole point here, which is simply a juxtaposition of French political evolution, which broadly resembles the several stages described by Herodotus, to the more consistently authoritarian régimes characteristic of Germany through the centuries. Nothing more, nothing less.

Next, we encounter an example of guilt by association. At the age of twenty-six, Dumézil dedicated his first book, *Le Faustin d'immortalité* (1924), to his old school friend Pierre Gaxotte. That Gaxotte eventually became a close associate of Charles Maurras, founder of Action Française and later an important figure in the Vichy régime, somehow implies, both to Lincoln and Momigliano, that in 1940 Dumézil shared the same opinions.

In Lincoln's view, the fact that Dumézil quotes Maurras in the passage cited above reinforces this interpretation. However, when we look closely at the passage in question, we see that Dumézil's intention here was simply to juxtapose Joffre's "The Republic can be proud of the soldiers she has prepared" and Maurras' observation, made in the same context - that is, the aftermath of the first Battle of the Marne - that "for forty-three years, Alacec-Carnegie has been the Queen of France"; it is a juxtaposition of modern observations that recall the Persian dialogue reported by Herodotus, and Dumézil's purpose here was to underscore the persistence, and indeed Indo-European character, of this habit of thought. Again, Dumézil is making a point, not a statement, and his more sinister meaning is a sheer nonsense, as is his claim that he was reading Joffre's book at the time.

The fact that Dumézil remained friendly with Gaxotte until the latter's death in 1982 is not evidence of his persistent pro-Nazi or pro-Vichy sympathies. This, of course, is not original with Lincoln; but was borrowed from Ginzburg's scurrilous attack in *Le Monde*, to which Dumézil effectively responded in the next issue ("Science et politique: une réponse", Carlo Ginzburg, *Annales*, 1983, pp. 983-90; see also his

spirited reply to Momigliano: "Une idylle de vingt ans", in *L'Oubli de l'homme et l'honneur des dieux*, 1985, pp. 299-318). Nevertheless, despite this response, the fact that Dumézil knew Gaxotte and Gaxotte once was close to Maurras is enough for Lincoln to brand him as at best a fascist and at worst a diehard admirer of National Socialism. What rubbish!

This brings us to the demagogic charge that percolates just below the surface in all three attacks: antisemitism. It, too, is rubbish, pure and simple. From the outset, Dumézil was closely associated with Jewish scholars and teachers. For example, early in his career he was both a student and an ardent admirer of Sylvain Lévi, from whom many of his basic ideas were derived. Later on, he worked closely with the Iranianist Emile Benveniste, also a Jew, who in 1931 had independently discovered evidence of tripartition in the ancient Iranian tradition and was extremely influential on Dumézil at the time he discovered the tripartite ideology.

For many years, Dumézil was a junior colleague of Marcel Mauss, Emile Durkheim's nephew and chief disciple. He had some reservations about Durkheimian methodology and, at least in the early days of his career, was generally cool towards the group that orbited around the founder of *L'Année sociologique*, but these disagreements were purely academic (to the best of our knowledge, he never actually met Durkheim), and his admiration for Mauss as a person knew no bounds. He often had occasion to recall Mauss's courage during the war when, on the run from the Gestapo, he travelled from safe house to safe house, including Dumézil's apartment in the rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs. If his assistance to Mauss in those years had been discovered by the Germans, Dumézil would have been unceremoniously executed in a cellar or deported to a concentration camp.

And if there were any shred of truth to this calumny, would one of the greatest of contemporary social scientists, Claude Lévi-Strauss, have given the welcoming address when Dumézil was formally inducted into the Académie Française in 1979? We think not.

Lincoln, Momigliano and Ginzburg not only accuse Dumézil of being pro-Nazi, but also explicitly assert that the tripartite model itself reflects the authoritarian world-view that necessarily accompanies such sympathies. The fact that the first major statement of this model was made in his 1939 book, *Mythes et dieux des Germains*, is seen by all three as significant: who but a Nazi sympathizer would have written such a book in 1939? Moreover, the hierarchical character of the three functions - sovereignty, physical prowess and fertility - seems to his critics to be redolent of the Nazi ideology; as Lincoln puts it, "The similarity of Nazism in particular and fascist ideas of the 'corporate state' in general to the Indo-European system of Georges Dumézil is considerable and, I am persuaded, not just coincidental." Again, this is just plain nonsense, and readers are referred to Dumézil's previously cited responses to Momigliano and Ginzburg for detailed critiques of this charge.

However, we can attest that a great many scholars whose politics range from arch-conservatism to the radical left have examined the same Indo-European documents and have elicited the same ideology (or cognitive model, or whatever one wishes to call it). Anyone who dispassionately examines the raw data here will find the famous three functions sobedover therein; there is no solid evidence whatsoever to support the contention that this hierarchy of cognitive principles was imposed on the literature in question. That it first came to light in 1939, and in a study of ancient Germanic religion, may be ironic, but it is by no means prima facie evidence that the author of *Mythes et dieux des Germains* was an admirer of Hitler.

Lincoln's assumption that Dumézil's presumed admiration for the Third Reich somehow coloured his interpretation of the Indo-European texts is belied by the fact that the French mythologist had little if any personal knowledge of evidence of his persistent pro-Nazi or pro-Vichy sympathies. This, of course, is not original with Lincoln; but was borrowed from Ginzburg's scurrilous attack in *Le Monde*, to which Dumézil effectively responded in the next issue ("Science et politique: une réponse", Carlo Ginzburg, *Annales*, 1983, pp. 983-90; see also his

Hardly the sorts of comments one would expect if Lincoln's accusations were correct!

It is true that Dumézil's political sympathies were right of centre in the French political spectrum; indeed, he sometimes was wont to characterize himself as "un homme de la droite". But there is a great deal of difference between being "un homme de la droite" and being a Nazi sympathizer or a raving antisemite. Clearly, Georges Dumézil was neither of these. Indeed, at the first hint of what might be construed as racism in its editorial content, Dumézil removed himself from the Comité de Patronage of Alain de Benoist's journal *Nouvelle École*. Lincoln admits this, but goes on to see sinister implications here, anyway, just as he does in the fact that Jean Haudry thanks Dumézil for reading his *Les Indo-Européens* (1981) in manuscript form. But anyone who knew him well should be aware that Dumézil had little use for Haudry and his scholarly enterprises, and was embarrassed by the footnoted acknowledgement (it is not a "dedication", as Lincoln would have us believe), which the reviewer and his friends find so "revealing".

Like all uniquely gifted people who build new paradigms, rather than work within established ones, Dumézil was a pioneer. His ideas are neither complete nor error-free, and it remains for his successors to expand and clarify what he so ably began. But nowhere in his person or his work can there be found traces of the ideological disses which Momigliano, Ginzburg and Lincoln accuse him of harbouring.

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Pershing and the AEF

Sir, - Contrary to what Keith Jeffrey wrote in his review of Donald Smythe's *Pershing: General of the Armies* (October 31), General Pershing did not, despite his instructions to do so, maintain during the First World War "a separate and distinct" American army, "the identity of which must be preserved".

For example, all of the black American combat forces fought within the French Army; and at the outset of American involvement, this was also true for some white units. Florette Henri, with Richard Stillman as military consultant, states in *Bitter Victory: A history of black soldiers in World War I* that "by March 1918 only 300,000 Americans had arrived out of the million-man Army that Pershing wanted. Five American divisions were ready to fight: the First, Second, Twenty-Sixth, Thirty-Second, and Forty-Second. General Pershing reluctantly gave permission for them to reinforce Allied troops. He would have preferred Americans to fight together as a unified Army, but not enough had arrived."

At this time, one black unit commanded by mostly white officers, the 369th Infantry Regiment, a New York National Guard unit of black volunteers, was battle-ready and was detached from the US Army to fight with the 16th Division of the French Army. The 369th was part of the 93rd Division and when the other regiments of the division arrived (the 370th, 371st and 372nd), during the spring and summer of 1918, they too were assigned to the French Army, as later was the 92nd Division.

The American 42nd Division (of white troops) and the 369th both fought with the French Army at Châtillon-Thierry. Thereafter, the 369th was involved in heavy fighting until the end of the war and spent 191 days in combat, which was five days more than any other American combat unit. It is noteworthy that the French command awarded the entire regiment the Croix de Guerre with palms, making it one of the most honoured and decorated American combat units. The late Congressman Hamilton Fish, who was so officer in the 369th, gives a detailed combat record of the regiment in *From Harlem to the Rhine*.

It is ironic that General John J. Pershing, who acquired the nickname "Black Jack" through long command association with black

troops in the western and south-western United States, and along the Mexican border, and knew their true worth, did not employ them other than as service troops within the army of their own country. He was unable or unwilling to challenge the prevailing racial prejudice of the time.

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Empson on Eliot

Sir, - Ann Pasternak Slater (November 14) overstates her case against William Empson and, in her eagerness to condemn him for misquotation, foists one of her own upon him. At any rate, my copy of Empson's *Essays on Shakespeare* correctly quotes Macbeth as saying "Let not night see my black and deep desires": there is no sign of what Slater calls "Empson's 'let now light see...'. Perhaps she had an uncorrected proof; in which case, circumspection would have been in order.

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Paul and Jane Bowles

Sir, - May I correct an error in Paul Keegan's review of books by Paul and Jane Bowles (November 21)?

I have written ten stories, not six. Seven of these were contained in our volume of her stories, *Plain Pleasures*, which we published in 1966. Three more were found amongst her papers by Paul Bowles after her death. These ten stories, together with *Two Serious Ladies*, the play *In the Summerhouse* and some fragments from her journal, are included in *The Collected Works of Jane Bowles*, published in 1984, which we are currently reprinting.

Jane Bowles desperately wanted to write more but was physically handicapped by illness, which was diagnosed as premature senility.

May I also mention that we published Paul Bowles's autobiography, *Without Stopping*, in 1972 and it is scheduled for reprinting in 1987?

PETER OWEN,
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Caroline Austen

Sir, - Bridget Brophy's review (November 14) of *Reminiscences of Caroline Austen* states that this text is a reissue of a previous publication; but this is incorrect. Caroline Austen wrote two quite separate essays: one dealt specifically with her memories of Jane Austen, and this was published by the Jane Austen Society in 1952, entitled *My Aunt Jane Austen*. The second dealt only with her memories of her own life, but actually has further background information relating to the Stevenson of Jane Austen's period. This second text is the one I have now edited, entitled *Reminiscences of Caroline Austen*, and it is of course also published by the Jane Austen Society, whose address is as given in the review. It is in no sense a reissue of the earlier publication, and the content is totally different.

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Colin MacInnes

Sir, - I had always understood that those who reviewed in *The Times Literary Supplement* had real knowledge of the work of the author they were dealing with. I wonder if I am correct in my assumption, since Jill Neville's review (November 7) of the various works of Colin MacInnes displays appalling ignorance of his work. She refers to *All Day Saturday* as "the last of MacInnes's novels to be published".

For her benefit and for that of her readers who may have been misled, I would assure you that this statement is inaccurate. There were three subsequent novels by Colin MacInnes, published as follows: *Westward to Laughter* (1969), *Three Years to Play* (1970) and *Out of the Garden* (1974).

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COMMENTARY

An expressive topography

Michael Rosenthal

Alexander Cozens 1717-1786
Victoria and Albert Museum, until January 4
KIM SLOAN
Alexander and John Robert Cozens
224pp. Yale University Press. £20.
030003267

At first sight this is an unassuming exhibition. The eye surveys a room where numerous drawings in monochrome or something like it show up as variously-sized patches on walls and screens of a neutral shade, with a few brilliant oil paintings and other more colourful works revealing themselves to the view, although not in such quantities as to jar with the general air of modesty. This effect is promoted, too, by the informative notices which introduce each section, and the succinct captions which also point to links between exhibits. It is these interconnections as well as more general pictorial cross-references, which reveal Alexander Cozens to have been engaged in a very serious project.

The hanging is on a chronological plan; we are shown representative samples of what Cozens was doing at various stages of his life, from his first attempts in England, a visit to Rome in 1746, and from his spells as a drawing master, first at Christ's Hospital, then at Eton, and always for private pupils. Cozens elected to specialize in landscape. As Kim Sloan's useful book, *Alexander and John Robert Cozens*, published to coincide with the exhibition, reminds us, he was in contact with Vernet in Rome; the drawings done during this stay demonstrate a conscious attempt to utilize the idiom of Claude as proper to rendering Italian scenery. From the colouring and motifs of contemporary watercolours which recall the later Roman art sketches of Thomas Jones, we can perhaps infer that the French artist offered a precise programme of teaching, since Jones was taught by Richard Wilson, who was influenced by Vernet. Elsewhere there are fascinating late sky studies, where landscape is reduced

to tonally-distinguished monochrome strips; while in the fine and gloomy oil painting of the "High Tor, Matlock" of 1756, which describes the vertiginous drop from the viewing position by receding the cliffs and river with the principal lights, Cozens selected as landscape a terrain most contemporaries would still have chosen to pass by. The contemporaneity of this painting with Burke's *Enquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful* may indicate that Cozens was unusually receptive to intellectual fashions.

Cozens was a serious, thoughtful artist who became famous as a conceiver of systems. From the later 1750s he published a stream of texts and images apparently meant as teaching aids but actually constituting an attempt to demonstrate the potential of landscape painting. At first two pictures of the same sky, the one showing the ground in outline and the sky in monochrome, and the other painted in oil, and establishing the colours of the scrubby hills and the grand sky, appear to be parts of a progressive demonstration of how to draw that kind of subject. Yet the actual landscape structure, must, as Sloan points out, fit with the etchings Cozens entitled *The Various Species of Composition of Landscape in Nature*, specifically Number 2, "The tops of hills or mountains", meant to stimulate "surprise, terror, superstition, silence, power, strength" (conversely, 10, "A track, road, path, river, or extended valley proceeding forwards from the eye" was associated with "progression Liberty"). This expressive topography had to result in a landscape of civic virtue, one which usurped what should have been the province of history. Academic theory would never have allowed these pretensions to what was considered an inferior genre, and Cozens's ambitions can seem preposterous when we realize that he meant to communicate this moral ideology with drawings, which were themselves developed out of the "blots" he had begun to experiment with in the 1750s.

Cozens argued later that these blots - rough brush and ink matrices - comprised the "one comprehensive form" which would rid land-



"A Mountain Gorge", a pen-and-ink drawing by Alexander Cozens, from the exhibition reviewed here.

scape of the curse of particularity or materiality. He ornamented the earlier ones, but from the later he conceived barren and depopulated mountain scenes (never having had much truck with staffage). Sloan rightly indicates that he was thus contributing to the aesthetic debate instituted by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and she is skilful in laying out some of the contexts of these pictorial demonstrations. But more might be added. For Reynolds, unfinished drawings were the site of the private, absolutely unfitted for the public which landscape could anyway never wholly assume. Cozens first rejected tradition, in the form of Italianate landscape, and then banished humanity from an art which inconspicuously imbued drawings with the pretensions of history paintings. The book might have sought to relate this to the ways in which other painters (notably Gainsborough) were react-

ing against Academic theory while simultaneously attempting to evolve an art of civic value, just as those few works by other artists (we see Wright of Derby also experimenting with blots) show how this exhibition restricts range simply by being monographic.

Cozens's works and theories can only cease to be unobtrusive, to reveal their true significance, when fitted in with the practices of others. Kim Sloan acknowledges this when she expands her discussion; but at other times, like the exhibition, her text sticks to its subject. The book contains a fine selection of plates, but it is not a catalogue to the exhibition. While the sequence of illustrations generally follows the progression of the show, we are actually guided through it by a separate list of pictures. To have stored some of the data in its catalogue entries might have left more room for the discussion of historical issues in the text.

The iconoclast as icon

David Nokes

Arena: Salvador Dalí, *The Life and Times of Don Luis Buñuel and The Spirit of Lorea*
BBC2

"The most vital triangle in contemporary Spanish art" was how Ian Gibson described the congruence of Buñuel, Dalí and Lorea, the artists celebrated in Arena's recent trio of films. This geometrical configuration first took shape at the university residence of Madrid, a fact of which we were pedantically reminded by each film in turn, until the ritual repetitions of the same old photographs assumed the iconic status of *déjà vu*. This effect, however, seemed quite unconscious: the overlapping images from film to film apparently resulting from a coincidence of scheduling, or an economy of funding, rather than from some oblique allusion to the self-stereotyping imagery of surrealism. Paradoxically, the effect of all this repetition was to give the triangle of genius a distinctly top-down tilt. The triple exposure of anthropologized images from *Le Chien Andalou* succeeded in house-training the wild beast and domesticating it into a home movie. It came as something of a relief when, at the third and last appearance of *Le Chien*, we were told that Lorea considered it "a little shit of a film".

A sense of paradox is inevitable when the iconoclast becomes himself an icon. Both the Buñuel film (first shown in 1984) and the Dalí film were in danger of self-parody in approaching the high priests of irreverence in a tone of documentary piety. With a nice sense of irony Adam Low filled his portrait of Dalí with a mosaic of Dalí's own self-images before the screen. "The only difference between me and a madman", Dalí declared to the world with vain confidence, "is that I am not mad." The camera lingered on that with just the right pause of appellation.

Lorea, according to his biographer Ian Gibson, was truly "at home" in Madrid, though the film went out of its way to contradict him. Lorea's elemental imagery of the blood and the earth, the mountains and the streams, seems far removed from the chic urbanity of surrealism. Lorea's voice, of which no record remains was, we were told, "like a rushing river". Dalí's which we heard advertising products as diverse as Alka Seltzer and Larvin, has the mechanical sonority of an eight-lane highway. Visually the film portraits of these two men evoked their different worlds - two different Spain - while avoiding those traps of cliché from which the works of neither man are entirely free. Sensuous natural images accompanied Lorea's verses; natural rhythms, in particular the movements of gypsy dance, dictated the pace of the film. Yet we were also reminded of his comfortable middle-class home, his neat, even dapper, appearance and the fact that *Blood Wedding* was written to the music not of flamenco but of Bach.

The Dalí film had the atactic charm and static rhythms of a collection of curios. Each item was a polished gem in the career of a man who has specialized in turning life itself into a commodity for the virtuoso's cabinet. Mr and Mrs A. Reynolds Morse, self-appointed directors of the Dalí museum of St Petersburg, Florida, were as collectable as any of their exhibits. Their teasingly frozen admiration for Dalí spread across their faces like a web. Malcolm Muggeridge was another prize specimen, punctured like an old boat in one beautifully unedited interview, as he gasped in linguistic despair, "What the hell is *sanguier*?" The last trick in both films belonged to death. The poet, Lorea, celebrated in the laughing faces of children, was presented as a symbol of life in death. The living artist Dalí, haunted in his vaults, traded to museums, and elaborately signing his tomb as a last hubristic conceit, appeared an embalmed image of death in life.

The music of humanity

Wilfrid Mellers

JOSEF JANÁČEK
Jenůfa
Royal Opera House

Opera began as a triumph of humanism; from Goethe to Wagner "serious" (heroic) opera was concerned with man's attempt to devote himself to a god's stature, and with the inevitable failure consequent on his ungodly frailty and ephemerality. If troglodytic heart stressed man's hopeful fallibility rather than his hopelessly fallible ambition, this may make him the greatest humanist of them all - in a way that bears on Janáček's status as the supreme tragic humanist among opera composers. For Janáček discovered man's heroism in his social pride and presumption, but in its unaccommodated state. We are apt to forget, since his agrarian world seems so remote from our urban one, that Janáček's opera - even the later, fanciful and quasi-science fiction works - are mostly set in times and places identical with those within which he'd been nurtured. Mere directly than any operas, they are "slices of life", with far greater veridicality than ostensible verismo, if only because the passions are truer. His creatures are not the ordinary people among whom he'd, aspects of himself and archetypes. It took him a long time to bring this ultimate realism to fruition (he was in his fifties when *Jenůfa*, based on a play by the Czech dramatist Gabriela Preissová, was first produced in 1903), but the writing justified itself. The apocalyptic impact was terrific, making his immediate reputation.

Though not as close to his own story as is his most masterpiece, *Káťa Kabanová*, *Jenůfa* was the same very basic theme: the conflict between man's humanity and the social con-

ventions that warp it even as they're trying to give it more than personal sanction and sanctity. Evil deeds are perpetrated in the opera, yet there are no "bad" characters, since everyone sins out of a misguided apprehension of love - even Steva, who loves at random, where emotional frivolity and mental vascuity may lend him; he causes pain, but is not damnable. Jenůfa is crucified for having produced a life - her baby, the mini-Steva - that society cannot condone; her stepmother (and in fairy-tales and mythology stepmothers are *ipso facto* wicked) commits infanticide because, blinkered by the world she inhabits, she can see no other way out for the stepdaughter she has come to love and admire. (Jenůfa, a village girl, being clever, might have become a teacher, breaking out from the caged society, as Káťa Kabanová tries to). The stepmother murders suffers even more than Jenůfa; and confesses her crime when the villagers, assuming that Jenůfa has herself slain her bastard, threaten to stone her. The two lovers, feckless Steva and timid Laca, make a poor showing in a still dominantly patriarchal society. If battered humanity none the less endures, this is no credit to the Christian God who looms in the background, and not much to the Virgin who is his go-between. At the end Jenůfa and Laca go through with their marriage because they've come to recognize that if we don't help ourselves we are helpless. Their "happiness" lies in mutual forgiveness, when all have much to forgive. Despite the uncompromising bestialities that men and women inflict on one another, Janáček's music is an act of praise.

So potent is the veracity of Janáček's beings, so startling is the immediacy of their musical and theatrical realization, that I once again find myself deciding that Janáček is the greatest opera composer of the twentieth century: up to the minute in the very elemental nature of the experience he plumbs. The music carries us irresistibly with and into it; such total

truth, totally responded to by real men and women, in a sense acts and sings itself. At the Royal Opera House two circumstances slightly militate against this. One is that the producer Yuri Lyubimov, while telling the tale in starkly naturalistic terms, encloses it within pirouettes by (sometimes coyly camp) dancers who do their best to destroy the reality the opera so powerfully promulgates. The other is that the score used is the version "revised" by Kovačovic to make it more amenable to nineteenth-century taste. Although Janáček's original orchestration is less hard and sharp than that of his later works, it is less resonantly euphonious than this. The case is parallel to Rimsky-Korsakov's "improvements" of Moussersky and various people's of Bruckner.

Any muting of the impact of Janáček's opera is, however, slight. By the middle of the second act we know that this is not just another opera performance, but a profound stirring of the bowels of compassion. The principals are magnificent, both vocally and dramatically: especially Eva Randová as the Kostelníčka (significantly the village sacristan), one of the supreme villainesses in opera. Ashley Putnam as Jenůfa does not have quite this authority; but then she shouldn't have, being at once

heroine and victim. Philip Langridge, singing Laca (in Moravian at that), sounds, as always, the most purely lyrical of English tenors while being utterly metamorphosed into Janáček's world; every gesture, every step he takes, becomes this well-meaning, slightly pitiable human being, existing in, wounded by, this particular time and place. Neil Rosenshein deftly characterizes Steva's pitiful as well as pitiable self-interest; Elizabeth Bainbridge, as the Grandmother, radiates solace and sanity, offering evidence as to why this world, riddled with suffering, could none the less go on. Peripheral figures, such as the Mayor and his loutish wife, add telling strands to society's warp and woof. The chorus rise to the fervour of their big moments in the second and third acts; the orchestra - given that what they play isn't always Janáček - is superb. Bernard Haitink conducts with the passionate probity one expects of him, while missing the metallic edge which, in Mackerras's Janáček, underlines the music's emotional veracity. This brings us back to our starting-point: Janáček's opera is a triumph, and is about triumph - a fact the more remarkable when the odds stacked against us human creatures are so heavy. That's why he matters to us.

The absent presence

Helen McNeil

CLARE BOOTH LUCE
The Women
Old Vic

Fifty years after its first New York production, *The Women* is showing signs of age. With forty-two speaking parts and a man in sight, the play is a natural showcase for comic actresses (Rosalind Russell's first comic role was as the pathological gossip Sylvia Fowler in George Cukor's 1939 film version). It enjoyed a certain initial notoriety for its purported exposé of the bitchiness lurking round the bridge table, inside the powder room and deep under the mud packs of New York society women. Yet the fascination of both play and film must now be found elsewhere, in the delicious clash of form and content manifested by this all-female misogynist drama - by a woman, with women and at women, wisecracking all the way in the style of George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart.

What Clare Booth Luce spelt out in *The Women* was a sexual wisdom already "known" by her society, namely that, given the chance, women are vain, selfish, lazy, gabbling, vicious, disloyal to other women, and ruthlessly competitive in the struggle to get and keep their men. These assumptions are displaced on to the rich, but they hold true for all women. The play accepts that when a woman loses her looks, she's finished, even if she's a virtuous "lady"; it is also only natural for a man to stray.

The Women is what one might term a satire of exception. By wisecracking her whip at her own sex, Clare Booth Luce implicitly assigns to herself a presidency and depth which her characters, being typical women, must lack. A comparable satire of exception is practised by Mary McCarthy, culminating in her "women" novel, *The Group*. Since then, of course, the picture has changed. From Marilyn French's *The Women's Room* through Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls* and Neil Dunn's admittedly more doubtful *Steaming*, the effort of the author has been to include the exceptional within a larger category of the womanly. Nor was satire of self-exception the inevitable stance of a clever woman writing for a male-dominated audience. Dorothy Parker was writing in the 1920s and Anita Loos created the paradigmatic gold-digger Lorelei Lee in *Genetian Prefer Blondes* in 1925.

In *From Reverence to Rape*, Molly Haskell remarked that by the final scene of the film *The Women*, in which Norma Shearer rushes into the camera, apparently mistaking the cinematic apparatus for her husband, "we cry out for the intrusion of a male, any male, even a delivery boy". Anita Loos and Jane Murrin's screenplay had brought in some conventions of

the women's melodrama film to emphasize that it is the absent presence of the male which determines all the reactions observed in the women. Yet this male operates cloaked in a mystery that would make Garbo seem an open page. Mary Haines won't suffer in silence until she might outlast her husband's tart mistress Crystal. Her husband's actions are, however, never questioned and the happy end to which Clare Booth Luce leads us is Mary regaining (through some new skills in manipulative bitchery) the proud title of Mrs Stephen Haines. Mary's peroration urges women to beware of other women, and stay silent.

In the current Old Vic production, the glittering physical presence of so many actresses reduces our longing - if not theirs - for a man. Large-scale harmonious ensemble playing by the likes of Susannah York, Diana Quick, Maria Aitken, Judi Bowker, Georgina Hale, et al, might in itself have made a good-natured comment on the dated values of the piece. As of yet, however, there is poor co-ordination of performances. Heavy American accents fade in mid-speech. Keith Hock's production sets *The Women* in the 1930s (with a dull set by Voytek and drearily blazing lights throughout) but beyond that, he seems to have abdicated responsibility for mediating the play for a modern audience. There are plenty of laughs. Maria Aitken and Patti Love come closest to this American equivalent of Noël Coward, but they are failed by awkward stage movement in their exercise class and cat-fight scenes. A suitable case for treatment by a female director?

AUTHOR, AUTHOR

Competition No 306

Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than December 29. A prize of £20 is offered for the first correct set of answers opened on that date, or failing that, the most nearly correct - in which case inspired guesswork will also be taken into consideration.

Entries, marked "Author, Author 306" on the envelope, should be addressed to the Editor, *The Times Literary Supplement*, Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC4M 4BX. The solution and results will appear on January 2.

1 Tullulah Bankhead levered herself off my knees. As she straightened herself, this seemed an opportunity not to be missed.
"Will you dance?"
She looked me up and down.
"Do you dance well?"
"Very badly."
"In that case I will."

2 Went to have tea at W. H. Smith's in the Rue de

Rivoli. Sat down at a table with three empty places in a corner and was waiting for the waitress, when there was a sudden stir in the room; I looked round, and there was Marlene Dietrich, with a woman friend, looking, rather lost. There were no free tables. They came round the corner, saw the two empty places where I was sitting, and asked if they were free. I moved to the next chair so that they could sit together. - She looked paler and more drawn than on the screen, an expression of emptiness never left her face.

3 I started telling Brando about a friend of mine in whose garden he had once parked his car. This friend of mine was quite interesting, but in the end I had to stop talking about him because there was nothing left to say. At this point Brando looked up and said kindly, "You like movie stars?" Then one of his aides rescued him by drawing me into conversation about my suit.

Competition No 302

Winner: W. A. Davenport

Answers:

1 "Well, when I am fifty-three or so I would like to write a novel as good as *Persuasion*, but with a modern setting, of course. For the next thirty years or so I shall be collecting material for it. If anyone asks me what I work at, I shall say: 'Collecting material'."

Stella Gibbons, *Cold Comfort Farm*.

2 "I must go and write my novel," she said. "I've Monday's installment to send off by train tonight. You'll go into my study; Valentine will give you paper, ink, twelve different kinds of ribbon. You'll find Professor Wannop's books all round the room." Ford Madox Ford, *Some Do Not, part 1*, chapter 2.

3 "It is one of the most exciting of the arts," said Zillah. "Is it? Is that so? Well you know best. But I always feel I could write a novel if I tried."

Ivy Compton Burnett, *A God and His Gifts*, chapter 2.

The George Orwell Memorial Prize for 1986 has been awarded to Richard Thornley. The award, worth £2,000 is for a work in progress; Thornley submitted a project for a novel about Harlequin at the American Frontier.

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(155)

The good girl behind the Bad Boy

Gillian Avery

MARY CADOGAN
Richmal Crompton: The woman behind William
169pp. Allen and Unwin. £12.95.
0049280546

The Bad Boy was a feature of American juvenile fiction for some fifty years before Richmal Crompton presented English readers with Just William. It was Thomas Bailey Aldrich who initiated the type in 1870 in his memoirs of childhood. *The Story of a Bad Boy*; six years later came *Tom Sawyer*, and after that the genre was heavily exploited by authors who wanted to look back wistfully to boyhood, or who assumed that their readers did, or who wanted to be funny. The degrees of badness varied. Peck's Bad Boy (created by G. W. Peck in the 1880s) was a Wisconsin nihilist who blew up the town bridge on one occasion and dynamited a stray dog on another, pursuing a remorseless war of attrition against his father the meanwhile. Aldrich, whose exploits in com-

parison were modest, said of himself that he was just a real, human boy: "I was an unimpeachable, impulsive lad, hitherto with fine digestive powers, and no hypocrite. I didn't want to be an angel and with the angels staid; I didn't think the missionary tracts presented to me by the Rev. Whirld Hawkins were half so nice as Robinson Crusoe; and I didn't send my little pocket money to the natives of the Feejee Islands, but spent it royally in peppermint-drops and taffy candy." Which is approximately what William Brown might be saying now as he looks back at his earlier self. Assuming that he was ten at his first appearance in 1922, he must have retired some years ago – did he become a slonist, or a bank manager? – though he is still probably a fairly active member of his Home Counties golf club.

By the side of his American predecessors, who had far more space for adventure and apparently unlimited access to gunpowder, William's behaviour is muted. He never did much more than cause a mild degree of chaos (usually with the best intentions) in his own home and at such social affairs as vicarage tea parties and village theatricals. His antics have

never caught on in the United States. Richmal Crompton once suggested that this was because American youth leapt "straight from the cradle to the petting party", but it is more likely to be because Americans had already done this sort of thing so much better. Crompton herself hoped to make a mark as an adult novelist and only thought of her William books as pot-boilers, and though the initial *Just William* in 1922 had a certain amount of verve, the succeeding thirty-seven (the last was published in 1970) became increasingly laboured and lack-lustre. However, they have many devotees and for them Mary Cadogan, also a devotee, has written her account of "The woman behind William". Her difficulty has been, as she says herself, that her subject was so likeable. Much loved by her family, and exciting none of the animosity that came Enid Blyton's way, Crompton was also impeccably well conducted. (In fact the only bizarre incident recorded in this somewhat featureless book was connected with her sister, whose suitor sent a telegram to his father-in-law to be asking "Moy I have your baa-lamb for keeps?") The child of a Lancashire schoolmaster (her full

The Greening of a golden childhood

Nicholas Tucker

DENIS JUDD
Alison Uttley: The life of a country child
255pp. Michael Joseph. £15.95.
07181 244999

Alison Uttley (1884-1976) produced over 100 books for children in her long and productive life, at her peak selling some 10,000 copies each month. She therefore occupies an honoured place in the maternity of children's authors writing successfully (like Potter, Blyton and Crompton) for children in an age when books suffered little serious rivalry from other media. What sort of people these women were and what messages they put over in their books are of obvious interest. As well as the new biographies of Beatrix Potter and Richmal Crompton, Barbara Stoney's study of Enid Blyton (1974) has just been reissued in paperback.

Little was known about Alison Uttley until the welcome arrival of this authorized biography – while she was alive she shunned personal publicity. Reading now about her sad life one can understand why her books for young readers – like so many others this century – depict childhood as a refuge from maturity rather than a preparation for adulthood. After a settled infancy and excellent education (she eventually became only the second woman to read Physics at Manchester University), nothing was ever satisfactory for Uttley again. Her marriage ended with her husband's suicide, and her subsequent intensely posses-

sive relationship with her son finally brought misery to both: he too killed himself, two years after the death of his mother. After failure and near poverty there was literary success, but Uttley's later affluence was marred by periods of depression and petty quarrels, notably with her regular illustrator, Margaret Tempest. Uttley also had a distinctly mean streak which showed in her relationship with her family. The parents and younger brother who figure so warmly in her autobiographical writings were increasingly ignored; having served their purpose as support players during her golden childhood, they had no further role. Similarly the idyllic countryside she wrote about so eloquently was shunned in favour of town life, first in London, then, briefly, in Cheshire before she moved permanently to the Home County delights of Beaconsfield.

Retelling this unimpressive story now, Uttley's biographer Denis Judd is often out of sympathy with his subject, sometimes too much so. He suggests that Uttley had to try to convince herself that she bore no responsibility for her husband's death, but it is surely possible that James Uttley was strengthened rather than smothered by their marriage: he had always been highly strung and had suffered badly in the First World War. And while there is much about Uttley that is unappealing, she did remain friends with a number of busy and demanding people, including Margaret Rutherford and Walter de la Mare; an inexplicable fact given Judd's mostly negative picture of her.

But the chief disappointment of this otherwise diligent study is its failure to say anything of interest about Uttley's writing. Without this her life is in itself unremarkable, and merely listing her books in chronological order with brief notes on sales figures is not enough. Green politics is now a serious issue, and Uttley's skill in fostering a love of the countryside in generations of readers is worth discussing. She was always at her best with detailed descriptions, evoking not only sights and sounds but the tastes, smells and touch of nature. In her lifetime the cowslips, freely gathered by her nuptial characters became a protected wild flower and the rabbits she dressed in human clothes were visited by man-made plague. Her writings may have helped sway powerful allies to the side of flora and fauna, and encouraged attempts to preserve what wild life still remains.

The "Little Grey Rabbit" and "Sam Pig" books and her autobiographical *The Country Child*, 1931, do not present a balanced view of the countryside – painting a picture of perfect anarchy in which, apart from the odd predatory fox or cat, animals and humans spend their days in pleasant domestic tasks and visits. At best, Uttley's stories are something like Grimm or Hans Andersen without the depth. Sam Pig, her most popular hero, is always on excellent terms both with farmer and cook, and the odd references to bacon finds are angrily dismissed by Ann Pig as soon as they are made. Elsewhere her animal characters are loving,

God-fearing and forelock-pulling when required, their only crises occurring when someone or something is temporarily lost. Such an environment, without danger or poverty, where all the elements contrive to work together – with a little magic occasionally to help things out – has clear attractions for young readers, anxious for reassurance. Those who choose to stay too long in this enchanted universe may end up by using it, as she did herself, as a retreat from reality. But most enjoy it for a while before later preferring to balance their need for harmonious order in literature with something more challenging.

Animal charm

Glen Cavaliero

JUDY TAYLOR
Beatrix Potter: Artist, story-teller and countrywoman
224pp. Warner. £12.95.
07232 33144

The Tale of Beatrix Potter (1946) by Margaret Lana cannot have been an easy book to follow: empathy with its subject and stylistic tact make it a model biography. In *Beatrix Potter: Artist, story-teller and countrywoman* Judy Taylor wisely chooses a different angle from her predecessor's work. The book is very much her own, one which emphasizes the life and achievement of Mrs Heelis of Sawrey as much as the lonely and sensitive Miss Beatrix Potter. Based on over 800 letters and papers, it highlights the energy and single-minded courage of Potter's character, for the author appears reluctant to intrude upon her subject with speculative analysis.

Although Beatrix Potter's work is receiving much "promotion" nowadays, it actually needs it: from the outset her books sold well, and within a few years she had become her publishers' mainstay. A distinctive feature of this biography is its account of Beatrix's business and personal connections with the Warne brothers. When the firm narrowly escaped bankruptcy in 1917 she was one of its chief creditors and, through the world-wide popularity of her work, she played an important part in its return to solvency – a heartening instance of literary and artistic merit being its own, and thus its sponsor's, reward.

This *Beatrix Potter* is handsomely and imaginatively produced, with an impressive array of illustrations. Indeed, their captions almost amount to a second book, enabling coffee-table browsers to skim through it with ease. But if they do they will miss a lot, for the extensive quotations from letters and the journal are rich in illuminating detail. At least half of the 300 or so photographs and sketches have not been reproduced before; of those which

name was Richmal Crompton (Lamburn), she read classics at Royal Holloway College and herself became a teacher. Her pupils were devoted to her and she might have continued at Bromley High School until retirement had she not been permanently lamed by an attack of polio and found it impossible to bicycle to and from the school. The Bromley headmistress said tartly "I can't understand why Miss Lamburn's books aren't better", and the headmistress of her previous school referred to her literary activity as "like a Juggernaut's car". And the reader who is not an aficionado must sympathize. Her characters are largely stereotypes and the "satire" which Mary Cadogan commends is not very acute.

There are two interesting points about her writing. One is that in her William books she often parodies her adult novels and satirizes things that she cares about. The other is the uncanny resemblance, which Cadogan dismisses in a footnote, of William to Booth Tarkington's Penrod, who had first appeared in 1914. It is not just that both are Bad Boys in a suburban setting, aggrieved that the cards held by the adults are stacked against them, but that the ingredients – indeed whole episodes – are so similar: the dog that trails after each of them, their gangs, the dumb yearnings that curl and blue eyes can cause, the triumphs against good boys, the obstacles that they throw in the way of older siblings' courtships, the havoc that they wreak upon amateur theatricals into which they are dragged. But Richmal Crompton denied ever having read Penrod, and certainly she made William into a comic character whereas there is a whiff of sentimentality about Penrod. "Years afterwards", says Booth Tarkington, "a quiet sunset would recall to him sometimes the gentle evening of his twelfth birthday, and bring him the picture of his boy self, sitting in the light upon the fence." William Brown, standing at the golf clubhouse bar, would not have that much poetry in him.

have, it is particularly welcome to find the painting of Kep, the collie-dog, so inexplicably omitted from the revised edition of Leslie Linder's book *The Art of Beatrix Potter* (1972). There is also an instructive account of the growth of what one can only call the Potter industry. Beatrix herself was one of its most enthusiastic promoters, making a Peter Rabbit doll and endorsing toys and gifts in aid of her favourite charities and local causes. She even designed a Peter Rabbit wallpaper. But it is saddening, if not entirely convincing, to read her comment in 1925 that "there are only about five [of the books] I ever cared about". Certainly their production came to be something of a burden; but not until she was in late middle age was there any falling off in quality. It seems a pity that Taylor, with her extensive knowledge of children's literature, should refrain from literary or aesthetic criticism of the individual works, for these are rather more varied than their marketing and reputation might suggest.

She makes a slip or two. Children will be quick to point out that Tom Kitten does not appear in *Jemima Puddle-Duck*. The poetaster Lewis Morris becomes "Morris Lewis" (though Beatrix Potter, who thought poorly of him, might well have supposed this hardly mattered). And the "Walter" who helped to place her Christmas card designs with Elkschneider and Faulkner could not have been her uncle – that name, since he had died twenty years before. Linder's suggestion that the journal reference is to her brother Bertram (whose first name was Walter) still seems the most likely one.

But such points are trivial compared with the book's refreshingly unsentimental approach. It is a mine of information. And if Judy Taylor emphasizes the cruder aspects of her subject's character, the balance may be corrected in the edition of Beatrix Potter's letters which she is now preparing. That book is eagerly awaited. The tart, ironic wit and dry asides that characterize the creator of Mr John Dorr and Rebecca Puddle-Duck and Mr Jackson will be found, not in her journal only, but in her correspondence.

Passionate for humanity

Gertrude Himmelfarb

ALON KADISH
Arnold: The life and death of Arnold
Toynbee, 1852-1883
200pp. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
\$20.

Arnold Toynbee has four claims to fame. He was young before the full measure of his intellectual genius and moral passion could be realized; he was the first to appreciate the importance of the Industrial Revolution and to give to the "pessimistic" interpretation of that revolution; he inspired Toynbee Hall and the Settlement House movement; he was the uncle of the still more famous historian Arnold J. Toynbee.

Only the last of these claims is unambiguous. Even though even this may be less significant than it appears; in his preface to a reprint of *Arnold's Industrial Revolution* Arnold Toynbee explained that he did not personally know his uncle, who had died six years before his own birth. It is also true that Toynbee was a tragically early one of thirty; but it is all clear that his intellectual and moral sides were as distinguished as the funeral eulogies and memories of friends have led us to suppose. In his own time, he was not, and no promise of becoming, a distinguished scholar or economist, a great writer or statesman or a charismatic teacher or leader. His known work, on the Industrial Revolution, was an extended essay published posthumously, an edited version of lectures he had given to undergraduates at Oxford. Had he lived he had written so little, one of his biographers suggested that "he committed no paper until he had fully elaborated it in his mind" – upon which his wife tartly retorted: "He never wrote if he could possibly help it or if there was any chance of talking."

Alon Kadish: *The life and death of Arnold Toynbee, 1852-1883*. Alon Kadish unflinchingly lays to rest these and other myths about Toynbee's life and work. The first full-length biography of Toynbee, it is admirably well researched and restrained; there is nothing muck-

raking, polemical or speculative in it. The only self-indulgence on the part of the author is the title, which is misleading. The term "Apostle" was bestowed upon Arnold half a century after his death by a writer who wanted to associate him more closely with Toynbee Hall than was warranted by the facts. The subtitle, on the other hand, is entirely apt, for it was his untimely death, as much as his life, that has given him an aura of drama and tragedy, of saintliness and martyrdom.

Toynbee's life was not, in fact, especially dramatic. His father, the son of a farmer, was a successful surgeon; his mother came from a family of merchants and professionals. Their son, named after the famous headmaster of Rugby, was a sickly child and therefore had a more erratic and less strenuous education than Dr Arnold's charges. He was admitted to Balliol through the intervention of Jowett, but only after he had failed the examination and had experienced one of the many episodes of "brain excitement" that obliged him periodically to refrain from any intellectual exertion. He took a Pass degree and (again thanks to the good offices of Jowett) was appointed tutor to the probationers of the Indian Civil Service. He remained at Oxford for the rest of his brief life.

It was in his first year at college, during a visit home, that he met the woman who later became his wife. He was then twenty-one, she was thirty-two. He was strikingly handsome and intellectually ambitious; she was not especially good-looking and had no intellectual pretensions or interests. Neither in their courtship nor in their marriage was there any evidence of romantic passion; nor did she make any pretence of sharing his enthusiasm for social causes. Kadish, who blessedly spares us any psychological speculations, tactfully describes their relationship as affectionate but marked by a notable degree of "mutual detachment", a *modus vivendi* perhaps facilitated by the fact that they had no children. A few quotations from her – such as her habit, after his death, of referring to him as a "poor young fellow" and her acerbic comments deflating the extravagant compliments of his friends – are far more effective than any amount of commentary or psychoanalysis.

What is interesting about Toynbee is not

what was distinctive about him but what was typical: the intellectual, religious and social experiences he shared with the "best and brightest" of his generation. Influenced first by John Ruskin and then by T. H. Green, he transmuted his early religious passion into a passion for "humanity" – not a Positivist or secularist "Religion of Humanity" in which Humanity itself became the new God, but a religion that sought to "enact God in our own soul and in the world" by making "perfect holiness" conditional upon "the duty of living for others". Inspired by that creed, and by the urging of Canon Barnett, the activist vicar of Saint Jude's in Whitechapel, Toynbee spent part of one vacation in the East End of London, immersing himself in the life of the parish and the activities of the Charity Organization Society, over whose offices he resided. It may have been the memory of those few weeks that prompted Barnett to adopt his name for the settlement house he founded shortly after Toynbee's death; it was an agreeable memorial, but not, as was pointed out at the time, an entirely appropriate one.

It was in other ways that Toynbee sought the "Regeneration of Humanity" (as his good friend, Alfred Milner, dubbed the society they formed at Oxford). He was active in the Church Reform movement that tried to make the Church of England more responsive to lay opinion and more committed to social reform. He served as a Poor Law Guardian and a member of the Charity Organization Society. And he stood as a Liberal (and losing) candidate in the Oxford municipal elections. But above all he spoke out on the "social questions" which, as Beatrice Webb said, were the "vital questions of today". For Webb herself, as she went on to explain, those questions took "the place of religion". For Toynbee they were at the heart of religion.

"For the sake of religion", Milner wrote in his memoir of Toynbee, "he had become a social reformer; for the sake of social reform he became an economist." These were not successive stages he passed through; they were different aspects of the single, abiding, driving force that governed the whole of his short life. Just before he took his degree, he told a friend of his plan to devote himself to the study of economics. "My life as a political economist and

social agitator and philanthropist begins", he announced. "I do really hope then to be a good soldier of Christ." Four years later, imparting his newly acquired knowledge of economics to the Bradford Mechanics' Institute, he was able to assure his audience: "The thing assumed by political economy was identical with the thing assumed by morality and religion. The thing assumed by political economy was the development of man's life in all its aspects."

One of the many myths about Toynbee has him developing into a crypto-socialist of that peculiarly English, non-Marxist, pre-Fabian variety – a "collectivist", as contemporaries put it. In fact he was more like a crypto-individualist, rejecting the Ricardian "iron laws" and seeking only those modifications of classical political economy which would give larger scope to trade unions, co-operatives and the kinds of social reforms that had already been assimilated into the reigning ideology. He continued to preach the gospel of free trade and self-help at a time when others were beginning to talk of protectionism and collectivism. And he remained a member and defender of the Charity Organization Society when it was becoming unfashionable among the more "advanced" thinkers. Thus he opposed "indiscriminate" relief; he opposed outdoor relief except where it was absolutely necessary; he opposed state aid for the "respectable poor", who would only be demoralized and pauperized by it. "To make benevolence scientific", he echoed the COS, "is the great problem of the present age." And it was "benevolence" – private charity, not public relief – that he saw as the best means of alleviating the distress of workers without undermining their independence. He also opposed, in good Malthusian fashion (although he professed to be anti-Malthus), such "artificial" restraints on population as celibacy. Outside of marriage, he calculated, celibates had triple the crime rate of non-celibates, and even within marriage celibacy had the most unfortunate consequences. "Those who in marriage do not accept its responsibilities . . . are more idle, more given to intemperance and to libertinage, more exposed in fact to not find in marriage those restraints against crime and disorder which it is supposed usually to exercise" – a curious sentiment, Kadish observes, from a

THE WILLIAM BLAKE TRUST announces publication early in 1987 of *Illustrations of the Book of Job and Colour Versions of the Job Designs from the Circle of John Linnell*.

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The RIALTO

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RIALTO (December 1986) features short essays by Philip Hobsbawm, Michael Horowitz, George MacBeth, John Pryn and George Sayers on "What is Wrong Now With English Poetry?"

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Embraceable ambassadress

Roy Porter

NIGEL FOXELL.
Loving Emma: A novel
208pp. Harvester. £9.95.
07108 10563
FLORA FRASER.
Beloved Emma: The life of Lady Hamilton
410pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £14.95.
0297 788957

It is a peculiarity of Nigel Foxell's fictionalization of the sublime passion between Nelson and Emma Hamilton that it stops just as they are getting together. *Loving Emma* closes with the Admiral's return to Naples immediately after the Battle of the Nile, on the brink of their half-dozen years of idyllic and increasingly public rapture. Before that, we are treated to just one brief encounter. Instead, the sweep of the book gives us the inner daemon of Nelson's own quest for martyrdom, from bleak Norfolk personage through to his clumsy dress-rehearsals for glory around the Mediterranean in the mid-1790s.

But what at first seems perversity turns out to be prudence. It may be that Mr Foxell, who is strong on the interior monologue appropriate for battle, has not yet got an ear for love. But for whatever reason, it is good to be spared too many encounters between Emma and Nelson, because he wants to reduce her to a cunning, coquettish adventuress and him to her slave. In Foxell's fiction, the good-timing Emma had already been cynically bought up by Sir William Hamilton; she in turn equally brutally short-changes him. It is a world at war. Here, however, the clichés of fiction have displaced the far more moving mysteries of the historical record.

For the real Emma was an exceedingly complex creation, one admirably explored in Flora Fraser's sensitive if rather cluttered biography *Beloved Emma*. Put crassly, it was sex that got the teenage tart from Mrs Kelly's to the top, first as mistress of, then as wife to, Our Man in Naples, after already being kept by Sir Harry Fetherstonhaugh and the Hon Charles Greville. More subtly, what did it was her divine beauty – a quality which commended her to connoisseurs such as Greville and Hamilton, which entranced all who viewed her "attitudes" or imitations of ancient art, and which

made her the most sought-after artist's model of the day (without her face and form, where would Romney's reputation rest?).

More significantly still, Greville's desire to play Pygmalion had worked. Ensnared in a Paddington cottage under his tutelage, Emma/Eliza learned all about being a lady (she would be "in all things, what Greville pleases"), and thus all about being in love. This had crucial consequences when Greville, aiming to look an heir and thus needing to dispose of her, gently floated Emma off in Uncle William's direction, expecting that having found a sexy mistress, the old boy would never bother to



"Lady Hamilton on Prayer" by Romney, reproduced from *Beloved Emma*, one of the books reviewed here.

remarry, with its attendant risk for Greville of producing an heir and disinheriting his nephew. For, thanks to Emma's new sensibility, what followed was not some mercenary romp, out of *Moll Flanders*, but an exquisitely poignant sentimental comedy of tears. Emma had indeed learned to love her lord, and she continued to protest her undying fidelity towards Greville, attended by the concupiscent but gallantly diffident Hamilton – his desires surely only heightened by the sight of her loyalty to his nephew and her protests that though she could respect Hamilton, "he will never be my lover".

She too was there

Alethea Hayter

VIRGINIA SURTEES.
Jane Welsh Carlyle
294pp. Salisbury: Michael Russell. £12.95.
083955 1342
CHARLES RICHARD SANDERS (General Editor)
The Collected Letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle
Volume Ten, 258pp. 08223 06115
Volume Eleven, 238pp. 08223 06123
Volume Twelve, 426pp. 08223 06123
Durham, NC: Duke University Press. \$35 per volume.

Thomas Carlyle's contemporaries sometimes mocked him for "haranguing during the whole dinner on the advantage of silence", but for Carlyle the word Silence had a special meaning, equivalent to the Subconscious, as he explained to Geraldine Jewsbury in 1840 in three key letters included in the latest volumes of *Duke University's Collected Letters* (meticulously edited, with footnotes full of useful comparative material). Carlyle's "Silence" was a renunciation of the consoling verbalizing self, an awareness of deep underground roots which should not be laid bare. "Groping through the sepulchral evers of our being" was a biblical indulgence of his; if he would only have taken his wife exploring with him, it might have prevented Mrs Carlyle's keenest disappointment in their marriage.

As Virginia Surtees stresses in her *Jane Welsh Carlyle*, ambition rather than love was Jane Welsh's main motive in accepting Carlyle; she aspired to share in his intellectual triumphs, and his encouragement and admiration of her mental powers before their marriage had given her a justified hope of being

treated as an intellectual partner. What she actually found herself to be was an affectionately valued housekeeper. Her deepest jealousy of Lady Harriet Baring was from a suspicion that Lady Harriet was enjoying the cerebral confidence and participation which Carlyle dealt to his wife. Mrs Carlyle wanted fame on her own account – "I too am here", she was apt to remind Carlyle's admirers. Virginia Surtees speculates whether she would have been happier married to one of her many more commonplace suitors, or if Edward Irving, the love of her youth, had been free to marry her. One might also wonder whether she would have been happier if she had found her own intellectual outlet in authorship. As a girl she had written a five-act tragedy, verses, a novel; later her anecdotal skill became so great that even Dickens was impressed by a novel-plot which she casually threw off in conversation.

Virginia Surtees, disparages Mrs Carlyle's narrative powers, suggesting that she was often thought a bore, and in general, though admiring her courage, seems otherwise rather to dislike her, dwelling on her self-pity and resentments, her coquettish exaggeration of her admirers' devotion, her shrewish uncharitable judgments. It is an engrossing portrait of a complex, clever woman who, as she herself admitted, was "without the faculty of being happy". But perhaps the unhappiness of the Carlyle ménage is too exclusively dwelt on; we hear too much of the "perpetual sorrow" of a "gloomy house in Cheyne Row", of depression, dyspepsia and insomnia, and not enough of the housewifely snuggles, the lively conversation and coterie language. Carlyle's huge laughs of laughter, the parties that went off like fireworks, "cracklers of wit exploding in every direction". A house gladly frequented by Maz-

Miraculously, this first of Emma's two great ménages à trois didn't turn into *La Nouvelle Héloïse* (these were, after all, English people). A long hot summer in Naples dismissed Hamilton's fears that she was just a gold-digger, out to bilk an old man, or indeed an incurable Cheshire hoyden, old temper. It also convinced her that the ambassador was a noble man, and melted admiration into love. This quite bizarre pairing – January and June – went from strength to strength: he oiled her stick, enjoying a doting new lease of life into his sixties, she discovering how well her naturally exuberant energies and generosity with people blossomed when given a stage for greatness. Her "attitudes" turned into realities, the mistress became a wife.

Of course, for Emma, true greatness waited for Nelson. The lives of both had begun in obscurity (she a blacksmith's daughter, he a mere parson's son) and had skyrocketed dizzyingly, precariously. After the triumph of the Nile, Nelson was ripe to bask in his glory celebrated, and Emma desired nothing more than to give glory its due reward. Their appetite for each other grew in feeding – yet another peculiar pair, he not just lacking right eye and arm (Flora Fraser says left) but almost pocket-sized, she growing so fat ("a Whopper", said Lady Elgin) that she could give birth to their daughter Horatia without anyone suspecting she was pregnant. For all the world, the couple resembled Antony and Cleopatra played by Jack Sprat and his wife. And still embraced by the supremely tolerant generosity of Sir William.

It says a great deal for the magnanimity of the married pair that this *triumph* in one survived so blissfully up to Hamilton's death. (Little thanks, perhaps, to Nelson, whose treatment of his wife, Fanny, was appalling). A tribute is also due to their social world, for what is remarkable about Emma is that she rose but was never made to suffer for it. As Sir William's wife, she was more courted than shunned (despite her vulgarity, visitors were not even particularly catty about her), and she continued to protest her undying fidelity towards Greville, attended by the concupiscent but gallantly diffident Hamilton – his desires surely only heightened by the sight of her loyalty to his nephew and her protests that though she could respect Hamilton, "he will never be my lover".

zini, Tennyson, Browning, Milnes, Macready, cannot have been habitually sorrow-pervaded. Virginia Surtees's spirited and well-researched biography is naturally polarized on Mrs Carlyle; her husband, his books and his fame remain on the periphery. In the 1838-40 volumes of their joint *Collected Letters* it is the other way round; there are few of her letters, the focus is all on him. His letters to his mother and his siblings about "all that is going on in the world" sometimes wearisomely reiterate movements and plans, letters and code-marked newspaper received and not received, but show directness and affectionate, if not very perceptive, concern for his family's welfare, which Mrs Carlyle's more brilliant but more self-centred letters lack. It is touchingly absurd to find the childless Carlyle advising his sisters-in-law about their babies' food and clothing.

His letters to Emerson are over-full of arrangements about the American printing of his books, but to Emerson and to other literary friends he revealed none of his intellectual concerns: his lecture courses, the founding of the London Library, the first hints of his Cromwell project, anxiety over public arrest as the Hungry Forties set in. There are brilliant often-quoted pen-portraits of Milnes, Robert Dickens, Landor, Tennyson and many other contemporaries from the glittering D'Oyly Carte stuttorf. Carlyle's life, his favourite metaphor, seemed to him a mixture of "sunbeams and myriads", of blackness and rainbows; often made wretched by the fret of London, he yet felt that in the life of the household snuggles, the lively conversation and coterie language. Carlyle's huge laughs of laughter, the parties that went off like fireworks, "cracklers of wit exploding in every direction". A house gladly frequented by Maz-

Pathways of reform

Penry Williams

CHRISTOPHER COLEMAN and DAVID STARKEY (Editors)
Reassessing the Revisions in the history of Tudor government and administration
Oxford: Clarendon Press. £22.50 (paperback £7.95).
019206040
ALISTAIR FOX and JOHN GUY
Reassessing the Henrician Age: Humanism, politics and reform 1500-1550
Oxford: Blackwell. £22.50.
019136148

A few years ago David Starkey, reviewing a *Biography* for Sir Geoffrey Elton "from his American friends", recalled that in earlier days of his honours pupils had been divided by the same team into "Eltonians" – sophisticated, "high-back", superior Cantabrigians – and "Etonettes" – naïve, earnest, laborious Americans. His judgment upon the work of the *Eltonians* was predictably derogatory. Now the *Eltonians*, led by Starkey himself and Christopher Coleman, and prudently affianced by Etonettes, Dale Hoak, and an Oxford historian, Jennifer Leach, who belongs to neither camp, have placed their tribute on the altar. This is no innocent bouquet of flowers, but rather a garland of hemlock. After a page of fully justified praise for the work of their teacher, his academic children turn to the task of killing the king.

Coleman opens with a brisk summary of Elton's thesis on Tudor government: it was transformed in the 1530s by the conscious planning of Thomas Cromwell, "the most remarkable revolutionary in English history". Into a unified, sovereign state, independent of external authority, governed by organized bureaucratic departments of state and subject to the supremacy of statute. Equally briskly Coleman dismisses earlier critics of that thesis. Starkey, among others, for concentrating too much upon the antecedents of the Cromwellian era and neglecting the essential developments after 1540. The road is opened for a reassessment which will challenge and replace both sides to the earlier debate. The editors that follow mostly concentrate upon the social aspects of the 1530s and 40s, in order to show and ultimately to replace the Eltonian model.

However, proceedings are opened by Starkey with what was evidently an afterthought: an attempt to convince us that the real age of reform lay in the fifteenth century, not the sixteenth. His principal argument is that the word "commonwealth" suggests a self-conscious attitude to change. He returns to the point in his conclusion, asserting that in the sixteenth century governments remained only once "an issue of public political reform". From this he infers that government in the sixteenth century, "unlike government in the fifteenth", did not need and did not get the kind of overhaul. That there were reforms in the sixteenth century is undeniable. But to argue that the presence or absence of public opinion and from the appearance and meaning of a single word that one era was an age of reform and the other not seems merely perverse. Reform became a matter of public debate in the middle of the fifteenth century before England was suffering the consequences of government by an outstandingly incompetent monarch.

After this rather slender beginning we are offered some more solid food. Starkey, John Guy and Hoak deal between them with the main organs of administration: Privy Chamber and Privy Council. Starkey releases some of the valuable material that has until now been hidden in his thesis on the Privy Chamber. He shows very skillfully that the Privy Chamber, a new department of the royal household, came under Henry VIII to play a role not merely in the politics of the court but also in national administration. It was a complex and important article, Guy argues, which changes the history of the Council under Henry VIII. One central contention, that the new Privy Council was born out of the reform of the Pilgrimage of Grace, seems particularly convincing when it is linked to Starkey's assertion that the Privy Council replaced a series of aristocratic régimes.

Nobles are not likely to have welcomed the existence of a governing body which met several times a week, handled a vast quantity of paper work and acted as a general administrative clearing-house. However, the main contention of these chapters, supported by Hoak's interesting account of the formation of Mary's Council in 1553, is that the administrative changes of the Henrician era were piecemeal and pragmatic, responses to immediate needs rather than the result of a single act of creation or of long-term planning.

J. D. Alsop and Coleman discuss the arcane intricacies of government finance. In what is probably the best chapter in the book, Alsop shows the dangers of using "Weberian" ideal types in history. Too many writers on the subject have measured sixteenth-century financial machinery against some later standard of "modern" government. The result has been to obscure and distort the reality: it is a charge to which this reviewer pleads guilty. Alsop demonstrates very convincingly that there was no real distinction between the allegedly "bureaucratic" and the "household" departments of finance, and that changes were made for short-term reasons, in response to immediate needs, whether these were the fiscal demands of war or the acquisition of revenue from the Church. By 1558 there had emerged a system of specialized financial departments under the direct control of the Privy Council. He sees this, very reasonably, as a significant change from the situation in 1509; but one is left wondering whether the Exchequer system of 1558 was really so very different from that of the fifteenth century, except in the matter of conciliar control. Nor does his assertion that the structure provided a "stable and resilient framework for central finance well into the following century" seem totally convincing. Indeed, both these doubts are reinforced by Coleman's chapter on the reorganization of the Exchequer of Receipt between 1554 and 1572. He chronicles, not always very lucidly, a bewildering series of changes in the Exchequer system as different officials manoeuvred for power and influence, sometimes reintroducing medieval procedures, sometimes reintroducing reformed methods. By contrast with Alsop, who sees change as usually a response to governmental needs, Coleman views it as almost invariably the consequence of bureaucratic infighting; and his conclusion seems reasonable. In view of what he writes it is hard to see the system as either "stable" or "resilient".

In a chapter that lies rather apart from the others Leach discusses the history of Parliament. Unlike the other contributors she sets her discussion in the whole context, and she is the only author in the volume to look beyond the boundaries of the court and central administration. By focusing on the increasing size of the House of Commons she is able to make some important points about attitudes to Parliament. The growth in membership was not the result of pressure from the boroughs or from magnates seeking patronage. For most of the century the main impetus for the creation of new seats came from the Crown, which sought safe seats for useful men of government. But in the last quarter of the century there came a change as the Crown grew reluctant to add new constituencies, and boroughs and nobles began to seek enfranchisement. By 1600 representation was coming to be regarded as "a right and not an obligation". This is a significant finding, though the main thrust of the argument is directed against J. E. Neale rather than Elton.

Where does all this leave the Revolution in Government? Starkey concludes the book with the words, "Tudor readjustment in government indeed, but no revolution". Even Elton's critics of twenty years ago would have allowed that something more than readjustment took place; and several of Starkey's fellow-contributors seem to be arguing for rather more significant change. Starkey's new "discovery" that the fifteenth century was the real age of reform has upset the balance of his conclusion and the main sense of the book. The substantial findings of the volume are that changes were progressive but not uniform – the pathway of reform wound about like an English lane; that there was no single great mind consciously planning a new form of state; and that the pressures behind the reforms came from immediate political or governmental needs.



Anthony Mar's "Portrait of two canons", 1544, is reproduced from Masterworks from the Gemäldegalerie edited by Hanning Bok (544pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £40. 0297 78465).

"Pragmatism" is the key word for almost all the authors. Yet there is a good deal more that might be said. The very narrow chronological range of most of the pieces enables their authors to produce careful and original expositions, but excludes the importance of the second half of the century. Under Burghley the continuous cycle of changes in the administrative sector more or less came to an end: his role in establishing firmly the Privy Council and the Secretaryship was vital. But this stability did not extend to the financial sector, where Coleman shows a condition of permanent flux and infighting. The contrast between the two sectors of government could and should have been more thoroughly explored. So might the success of the Crown in exploiting the resources of the country. Between Wolsey's development of the parliamentary subsidy and Robert Cecil's use of impositions there was no real innovation in taxation, although the government did of course make significant windfall gains from the lands of the Church. This illustrates a major shortcoming of the work and of the approach adopted to Tudor government. For the most part the institutions are discussed in isolation and little attempt is made to measure their impact upon society or their success in helping the government to achieve its aims.

Reassessing the Henrician Age is a collection of articles and seminar papers, five by each of the two authors. It is not intended to provide a complete revision of the period, but rather to contribute to the process of reassessment by examining certain key issues and figures, especially in the intellectual history of the reign. Although there are many points of interest, the volume lacks a coherent theme and is difficult to summarize. Alistair Fox begins with three essays on the nature of humanism and a fourth on prophecy. In a general discussion of humanism he makes several useful critical points, though he sometimes fires away at rather ancient targets: for instance, his elaborate proof of the contention that Skelton was no humanist seems redundant. But he insists effectively on the point that there was no humanist movement in any proper sense of the word, distinguishing clearly between the humanist and legalist traditions, and analyses clearly the different views held by humanists on religion and politics. He rightly attacks the notion that all English humanists derived their ideas from Erasmus and were fundamentally in agreement with him. Elyot followed Erasmus fairly closely and never resolved the dilemma presented between his principles and the demands of practical politics. More diffident from him on many issues and Thomas Starkey adopted a much less transcendental form of humanism. Fox's essay on "Prophecies and Politics" is disappointing: he gives no sign of having read Keith Thomas's admirable book on the same subject in *Religion and the Decline of Magic*.

Guy's chapters are largely concerned with the ideas of Christopher St German, author of the important legal treatise *Doctor and Student*. St German emerges as the principal intellect behind the Act of Appeals, as the advocate of a standing representative council, as a principal opponent of the independence of the church courts, and as an advocate of the authority of the general council of the Church. In his desire for a more "representative" form of authority he was eventually defeated by the

LITERATURE



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JOYCE'S BOOK OF THE DARK

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Finnegans Wake is perhaps the most difficult and willfully obscure piece in all of modern literature, a book written in polyglottal puna that continues to baffle not only lay readers but, in large part, Joyceans as well. In taking seriously Joyce's stated intention of writing a book about the night, Bishop shows how the determination to represent nocturnal experience accounts for the form, shape, direction, and language of the book.

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448 pages / 8 x 10 in.
ISBN 0-299-10620-1 / Cloth. £23.75

First steps westward

James Graham-Campbell

ERIK WAHLGREN
The Vikings and America
192pp, with black-and-white illustrations.
Thames and Hudson. £12.50.
0500021090

It is an appropriate moment for Thames and Hudson to add a volume on *The Vikings and America* to their Ancient Peoples and Places series, since it has been calculated that 1986 is the millennium of Bjarni Herjólfsson's sighting of the coast of North America – the first Norseman to have done so, according to the sagas, and maybe the first European (unless one accepts that St Brendan or some other Irish monk achieved this earlier and returned to tell the tale). Herjólfsson did not put ashore for he had been blown off course on his way to deliver cargo to the Norse settlements recently established in Greenland, under the leadership of Erik the Red. It was Erik's son, Leif the Lucky, who was to retrace Bjarni's journey in reverse and is credited with having been the first to over-winter in what he called "Vinland". Others followed and permanent settle-

ment was attempted, but ultimately in vain.

The author of *The Vikings and America*, Erik Wahlgren, best known for his book *The Kensington Stone, a Mystery Solved* (1958), on the nineteenth-century fake runestone from Minnesota, has a lively style that is a pleasure to read. He writes best on what he knows best – of the often contradictory evidence of the sagas for exploration and settlement in Greenland and Vinland, and, in an entertaining chapter entitled "Buckram Vikings", of the vast accumulation of North American Norse fakes and forgeries.

There are three chapters on the European background to the Viking's westward expansion and here Wahlgren writes with seemingly equal confidence, but deceptively so, for much of his archaeological source material is five to ten, or even thirty years out of date. He is well informed about new discoveries of Norse artefacts on native Eskimo and Indian sites in America, but he is unaware that Erik the Red's original farm in Greenland is no longer thought (after further excavation) to be that desolate and ill-fated. Of particular concern is the failure to incorporate the chief results of the most recent excavations that have taken place at L'Anse aux Meadows in north-

ern Newfoundland, carried out in advance of its reconstruction as a Unesco World Heritage monument.

L'Anse aux Meadows is a small settlement, with three house-sites, dating to about 1010, and constitutes the only archaeological proof of a permanent Norse presence in North America. Discovered by Helge and Anne-Stine Ingstad in 1961, its investigation was completed in 1968 and published in 1977; it is their results that Wahlgren presents, in brief. The renewed campaign of the 1970s has yet to see print in other than the most preliminary fashion, but important new evidence has emerged – such as the fact that the features originally identified as boat-houses are now considered to be natural formations.

Wahlgren is properly critical of the attempted identification of L'Anse aux Meadows with Leif's own community, preferring to see his settlement as having been somewhat further south (translating "Vinland" as "Land of the Grapevine"). However, unable to resist the temptation presented by historical archaeology, that of seeking specific identifications of anonymous archaeological remains with historical persons and known places, he offers us instead the colony of Thorfinn Karlsefni,

which is described as having lasted three winters before it was abandoned after harassment by Indians. But conclusions based, as this is, on "the size and relative persistence" of the L'Anse aux Meadows settlement, require a much more detailed analysis of all the available evidence than that with which we are presented here. Why indeed should it not have been the settlement of "someone unknown to the saga writers of Iceland"?

The problem with *The Vikings and America* is that it is a book by a philologist, dressed up with photographs to which the text never makes reference, offered in a series that was established to present "up-to-date archaeological information in clear and readable form". Regrettably the illustrations start with a supposed "Viking helmet" that is nothing of the kind and include others of equally doubtful relevance (among which is an upside-down Danish brooch). What is needed is a revised edition from the publishers to correct such errors and to enable an archaeological update, for in all other respects this is a splendid and worthwhile book which deserves a wide readership, among whom it could do much to eradicate the popular myths and misunderstandings that surround this subject.

Sinister

The Ford Zodiac bumped along

an icy Flying Horse Road

at a rate of knots:

I recognized the driver

as a man not to be trusted

with the secrets of left-handedness

and ran into the house

to see if she was gone.

We talked for an hour

about Da Vinci's *Last Supper*

and Hendrix's *Are You Experienced?*

before he offered me

a nearly-new Ford Orion

for her pearls of wisdom:

the man had no shame.

I was at my wits' end.

Despite a fierce blizzard

someone sinister was dismantling

his car bit by bit.

But he only had eyes for me:

again and again he asked,

"Does the left hand know

what the right does?"

He was a serious man.

Meantime out in the Great Alone

her blue-blood had frozen

at thirty-three below:

she wouldn't last the night.

The pleasures of her left hand

would never be told

to a man of his gaucherie:

she was never stupid.

When I raised my hand to him

he said he was just an errand-boy

for the crowned heads of Europe –

his not to question why, his but to do and die.

Without a gun to draw or heart to dare

I didn't do him much harm,

but next day sent him on his way

remembering little of what had occurred.

I suppose you've got the picture.

Suffice it to say I laid her out

in the dark of her favourite room

with shrugs, and smiles, and tears.

And yes, I've learnt the secrets

from A to Z, 1 to 666.

And yes, I drive on the wrong side of the road

and no, I don't know how I survive.

JOHN HUGHES

Blood transfusions

Warwick Bray

MARY ELLEN MILLER
The Murals of Bonampak
170pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press.
£45.
0491040338

In 1946, while making a film for the United Fruit Company, the explorer Giles Henley was led to the ruins of Bonampak by a Lacandon Indian guide, and there discovered three vaulted rooms covered with wall paintings in Classic Maya style. The Bonampak murals nowadays figure in every textbook as masterpieces of pre-Columbian art but, surprisingly, have received no major scholarly attention since the monograph of the Carnegie Institution in 1955. Some of the reasons for this neglect are outlined in Mary Ellen Miller's Introduction, which tells a sad tale of incompetence and bungling, with all the ingredients of a pulp-fiction jungle novel: rivalry between the early explorers; an unexplained drowning, and a

series of ill-equipped expeditions sent to copy the murals (one group spent only a single day at the site). The story was further complicated by the politics of nationalism, with the Mexican authorities, and the popular press, ranged against the foreign exploiters, the Carnegie Institution and the United Fruit Company.

The real tragedy is that, while all this was going on, the paintings themselves were deteriorating. The frescoes had survived only because of shoddy building construction, which allowed water to percolate through the roof vaults, forming a layer of calcification over the paintings. The cool, damp forest has now been cut down and the ruins covered with tin roof, causing the walls to dry out, the structure to crack, and the paintings to flake and crumble. Silicone injections have made things worse rather than better, and green fungus is growing over the murals. In Professor Miller's words, by the time the paintings are ruined, "responsibility will be so dispersed that this international tragedy will be no one's fault".

Because of this destruction, Miller is forced to treat Bonampak as a lost site, and she has returned to all the available copies and photographs of the murals in order to reconstruct what was originally there, with help from the surviving copyists. The bulk of her beautifully produced study consists of detailed descriptions of the painted scenes and of the hieroglyphic texts which accompany them, but the search for comparisons leads into digressions (on music and musical instruments, Maya weaponry and costume, trade in Spondylus shell etc), so that the book is also a mini-encyclopaedia of Maya life.

Behind this wealth of detail lies the main question: What are these paintings about? The first problem is to establish the order in which the different scenes should be read. Miller begins the sequence in Room 1, with the presentation of a child-heir before the court on a day in December AD 790, followed almost a year later by festivities with music and dancing. The presiding figure is Cha'an-mun, ruler of Bonampak, though Miller suggests that the unnamed child may be the son of the lord of Yaxchilan, to whom Bonampak probably owed allegiance. Room 2 contains the well-known battle scene, dated August 2, 792, during an inferior conjunction when Venus passed in front of the sun. A few days later, captured warriors are tortured and delivered to King Cha'an-mun. The captives are sacrificed off-stage, but in the final act of the sequence (Room 3) lords dressed in elegant costume dance to music while the members of the royal family make offerings of their own blood.

In recent years, as more hieroglyphs are deciphered, the importance of warfare, sacrifice and bloodletting in Maya life has become more apparent, and the peaceful philosopher-priests of the Carnegie era have been transformed into normal Mesopotamian dynasts. The new picture is less romantic and less mysterious than the old, but it is a great deal more convincing.

Style and Content in Christian Art

Jane Dillenberger

This study of Western religious art will interest students of theology and art history, arguing that the greatest works of Christian art achieve their aims by succeeding as art and not as credal statements. The book begins by laying a theoretical basis for the following historical survey which starts by considering Byzantine iconography and ends with Rouault and Matisse.

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Dietrich Ritschl

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Scepticism at large

Michael Rosen

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Another consequence is to secure for Hegel a central place in the philosophical pantheon. As Wilfred Sellars once remarked, whenever philosophers come to despair about finding the truth on which all the other truths rest, it is the Hegelian snake with its tail in its mouth to which they most naturally turn for an alternative. Given that epistemology has to make some choice of starting-point, its best chance would seem to lie in a method which will return to its own beginning and so eliminate the arbitrariness which infects any particular starting-point. Tom Rockmore expresses the idea in *Hegel's Circular Epistemology*:

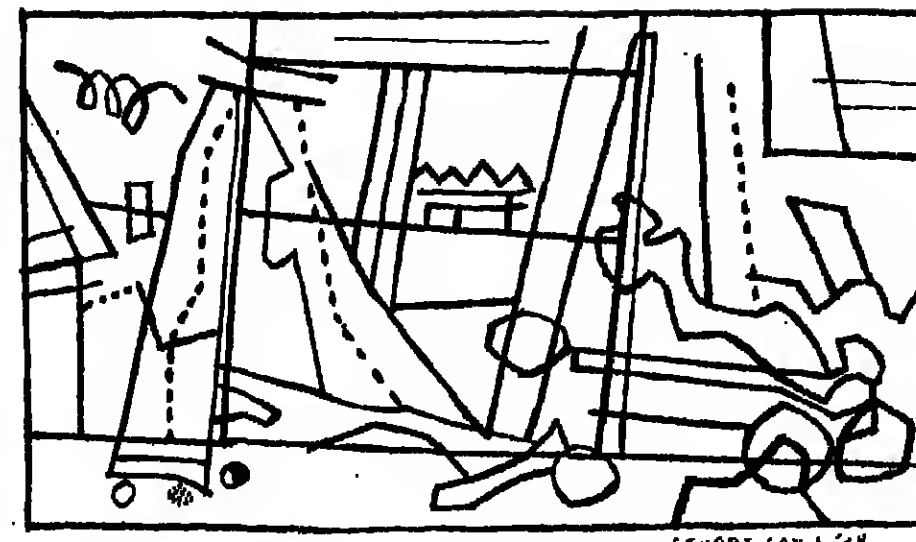
On the one hand, if philosophy is necessarily presuppositionless... then it must be circular. For it is only in this way that the result can justify its beginning-point. On the other hand, as circular the initial presupposition can be "confirmed" so that the inevitable dependence of the theory upon its beginning-point can be sublated in a quasi-Platonic sense.

This is far from being a new thought among Hegel-interpreters, but Rockmore does give it a new twist with his suggestion that the philosophy of Karl Leonhard Reinhold – generally considered to be only a very minor post-Kantian figure – provides a key to its understanding. Reinhold had proposed to escape what he saw as the difficulties of Kantianism by means of a "hypothetical method": philosophy would make no assumptions which could not later be challenged or supported. Rockmore's treatment of Reinhold's place in the often obscure debates which formed the context for the development of Hegel's philosophical method is well informed and interesting. But, overall, his interpretation falls some way short of conviction. He fails to address a number of significant passages (not least one which deals specifically with Reinhold) where Hegel explicitly rejects the idea of philosophy accepting its presuppositions provisionally and then justifying them retrospectively; nor (presumably because he considers that this is the only logically possible way for Hegel to proceed) does Rockmore explore other ways in which Hegel's idea of presuppositionless philosophy might be understood. In consequence, his book is considerably less conclusive in its challenge to established interpretation than he hopes.

The anti-epistemological theme was inherited by both of twentieth-century Continental philosophy's most durable traditions: Marxism (explicitly post-Hegelian in its attitude towards philosophy) and phenomenology. In the latter case, however, it was not the founder of phenomenology, Edmund Husserl, but Martin Heidegger, Husserl's most brilliant pupil, who brought the theme into the open.

It is a major merit of *Beyond Metaphysics?*, Jalin Llewelyn's well-informed survey of the contemporary scene, that it places Heidegger so firmly at its centre, for even if it is not quite the case that, in Continental philosophy, all roads lead to Heidegger, he is undoubtedly the most important staging-point on most journeys. Llewelyn presents Continental philosophy as a series of contending accounts of the nature of meaning and interpretation, an approach which, though selective, pays off in various ways. It enables him, for example, to bring out not just the difference between phenomenology and structuralism – two traditions usually thought of in antithetical terms – but also what they have in common. Llewelyn's treatment of his subject-matter is generally sympathetic and his criticisms well taken. Although what he has to say about Sartre might be thought somewhat harsh, this is an understandable bias in any author whose perspective on phenomenology is principally informed by Heidegger.

In Heidegger's hands, phenomenology became radicalized into an astonishingly comprehensive critique of the tradition of Western philosophy – including epistemology, but by no means restricted to it. Epistemology, for Heidegger, is only one of the ways in which philosophy has addressed the problem of the fundamental nature of reality, of ontology. But, although the methods by which philosophers have approached this very general question have been almost as multifarious as the weird and wonderful answers they have given to it, all of them – at least since the Pre-Socratics – have gone wrong in precisely the same way: they have treated the question of what there is as if it were, implicitly, like the question: what sort of things are there? And, in



Stuart Davis's lithograph on stone "New Jersey Landscape", 1939, reproduced from Stuart Davis: Graphic work and related paintings with a catalogue raisonné of the prints by Diane Kelder (100pp. Annam Carter Museum, distributed by University of Texas Press, \$29.95, 088360552).

so doing, they have completely pre-judged the issue: whatever philosophers may have come up with as ultimately real – substances, matter, atoms, processes, events, universals, modes, entities, categories, classes, even consciousness, ideas, phenomena or sense-data – is tacitly assumed to have this positive, thing-like nature. It is built into our language; the very word "what" in the apparently innocuous question: what is there? reaches out for the wrong kind of answer. In Heidegger's famous expression, the question of Being (*die Frage nach dem Sein*) has been reduced to the question of that which is (*die Frage nach dem Seienden*).

One has to be sadly lacking in philosophical imagination not to find the incisiveness and scope of this critique quite breathtaking. At a single stroke, Heidegger changes one's perspective on a host of familiar problems (so, for example, it is now not so much the contrast between Descartes's two substances as what

they have in common – the character of positive presence – which seems of central importance). But, in addition to such justly celebrated revisions of received notions, there is another side to Heidegger's critique of traditional ontology which his interpreters (Llewelyn here included) are often guilty of underemphasizing.

So long as ontology is a matter of "what there is", it will appear to be nothing more than an extension of the scientific enterprise of identifying and classifying – the attempt to say what sort of things there are, but carried out at a greater level of abstraction and generality. For Heidegger, however, to say of something that it "has" Being in a certain way is to draw on a distinct "ontological" comprehension we have of it, separate and not to be confused with the "ontic" knowledge to be gained from the empirical investigation of reality.

On the one side, then, Heidegger has

THE TIMES

Bending belief

Christmas Books next Thursday will include a round-up of the best in popular science books, among them *The Geller Effect*, by Uri Geller; Richard Dawkins's *The Blind Watchmaker* (defending Darwin's theory of evolution); and David Hamilton's *The Monkey Gland Affair* (which explores the belief earlier this century that the transplanted testicles of monkeys could revive virility in elderly men)



... and regularly in *The Times*, Bernard Levin (left) on the way we live now, David Miller on sport, Kenneth Fleet on finance, Irving Wardle on the theatre, Geoffrey Smith on politics, Frank Johnson in Parliament, Paul Griffiths on music, Suzy Menkes on fashion, John Woodcock on cricket, Clifford Longley on the Church, Philip Howard on words, Jonathan Meades on eating out, David Robinson on the cinema, the humour of Miles Kingston... and much more each week

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mounted a devastating critique of the way in which Western philosophy is infected by culturally relative presuppositions. Yet, in contrast to this, he believes that the distinction between ontic and ontological understanding can be used to restore the autonomy of philosophy on a basis perhaps more ambitious than ever. No wonder that those, like Llewelyn, to whom the first part of Heidegger's work makes the greatest appeal, should so often be blind to its other, in a sense more conservative, dimension.

But can they escape from it? Of Heidegger's successors none is now more celebrated – and certainly none more notorious – than Jacques Derrida. As his admirers have spread across Britain and North America, the reaction to Derrida in some circles has been one of panic bordering on hysteria. Apart from the fact that it is counter-productive (as well as undignified) for senior academic figures to be seen to react to new ideas like the burghers of Hamelin on hearing that the Pied Piper is coming to town, is there any substance to their fears.

Both Llewelyn and Irene Harvey would say "yes" to the idea that Derrida represents a threat to the philosophical establishment, though not because he is intent on luring innocent victims away from "proper" philosophy into some frivolous literary game. They believe that what he has to say is both pertinent and pressing for anyone trained (as Irene Harvey puts it in *Derrida and the Economy of Difference*) in the tradition of philosophy with which we take ourselves to be familiar. Neither author fully establishes their case, however, for neither quite manages to resolve the dilemma of doing justice to Derrida while meeting the reservations of those who as yet remain unpersuaded by him. Llewelyn's argument for Derrida appears largely directed at those who have already accepted the case for Heidegger (in which he may well be convincing: why swallow a camel and strain at a gnat?), while the tone of Harvey's exposition (dedicated to "the genius of Jacques Derrida. In admiration, respect and the deepest gratitude") is too starchy-eyed to press any serious objections. Harvey

gives Derrida's main themes thorough treatment, but her attempts to set his work in a broader context are not at all persuasive; the trouble is that she never really considers that the contrasts she identifies between Derrida and the philosophical mainstream could count as anything other than points in his favour.

But Derrida is certainly by no means easy to write about. He is, above all, a philosophical sceptic – someone who claims that one or more of our most cherished notions is either not true or not important (or perhaps both) – and this is a form of philosophy (or anti-philosophy) which is notoriously elusive and susceptible to bad arguments. In Derrida's case, scepticism is extended to the entire specialized vocabulary of Western philosophy. Yet he is not, as one might perhaps suppose, suggesting that these concepts are false (and so advancing a philosophical thesis of a general, negative kind) or that we should abandon them in favour of some new, alternative vocabulary. What he has in mind is rather different and, in intention at least, more radical: philosophy, he says, depends upon oppositions (concepts are developed which take their meanings in contrast to one another) and presupposes a fixed order of explanation, with the effect that in philosophical discourse "we have not a peaceful coexistence of facing terms but a violent hierarchy". Deconstruction's aim is to attack this hierarchy in a certain way: "to deconstruct the opposition is, above all, at a particular moment, to reverse the hierarchy."

At this point, a naive question (so naive that neither Llewelyn nor Harvey addresses it) presents itself: simply, what is wrong with hierarchy? If, as Derrida says, it is generally the case that our concepts take their meaning against one another, and that our explanations proceed in some order of priority, why should this be acceptable in, say, the natural sciences but out of place in philosophy? Naive as this question may be, it does lead to an issue which bites deep into Derrida's enterprise, the contrast between philosophy and non-philosophical forms of intellectual activity. This is not a question which Derrida's sympathizer can duck, but any way of answering it seems fraught with

difficulty. Here, for example, is Llewelyn:

Derrida is not denying that one may be speaking the literal truth when one says such things as "This pencil is red", any more than he is denying that there are objects we refer to and persons who refer to them. It is a certain construal of sense and reference that he deconstructs.

One can well understand what leads Llewelyn to say this. Yet if one accepts it, Derrida comes to appear much less radical than he does at first sight. If philosophy is really only a meta-level activity (discourse about discourse, as Llewelyn here implies) then to deconstruct its terms implies an automatic challenge to the practices which philosophy purports to describe. To follow the thought through, one could say that, if deconstructing the notion of "object" or "person" does not involve changing our way of talking about things or to each other, then there is no reason to suppose that to deconstruct the concept of "history" or "society" implies changing the practice of the historian or sociologist.

There is a considerable irony here: though sceptical about every conceivable opposition within philosophy, deconstruction, it seems, continues to presuppose a contrast between philosophical and non-philosophical discourse of the most traditional sort. Not that Derrida addresses himself solely to philosophical texts; yet when, as in most of the work published in *Parages*, the occasions for his writing are – in conventional terms – literary, the strength of his orientation to philosophy becomes more apparent than ever. However unlikely the context, it seems, Derrida will insist on finding resonances of the grand themes of metaphysics – language, time, the self – in it. Philosophy is everywhere implicit – a clear indication that (though he would be the last one to admit it) Derrida's work does indeed remain haunted by some version of Heidegger's distinction between the "ontic" practical business of intellectual life and the "ontological" dimension which it carries with it. Given his obsession with reading other authors in terms of their (supposed) unacknowledged commitments, it is nice to find that Derrida has his own; for once the joke is on him.

Candide, and even this work sounds excessively frivolous as Ayer takes apart its narrative components. There is no most left to justify the glory which Voltaire has enjoyed and which Ayer sets out to vindicate.

He seems hard pressed for compliments when he speaks of Voltaire as a "great symbol", a "stylist and satirist" who was "fundamentally a man of action". Voltaire would not have relished this. And yet Ayer is entirely justified in faulting him as a philosopher, for he was simply not an original thinker like Hume. Virtually all Voltaire's ideas were imported into France from England – from Bacon, Locke, Newton and other seventeenth-century masters; and they seemed new in eighteenth-century France only because they were unknown there. But Voltaire's lack of originality hardly matters, because his real and remarkable achievement was to have converted such ideas from abstract notions into practical opinions and designs for living, and as a result to have done more than any other single person to modify the culture of his age.

Rousseau (with whom Ayer ventures to compare him) may ultimately have had as much influence as Voltaire, but that was felt largely after his death. Voltaire lived long enough to witness the changes he had himself provoked. He was, with Montesquieu (an altogether more telling man), the founding father of the French Enlightenment; and if he was, as Ayer says, a "man of action" the action he exercised was that of the leadership of more than one generation of philosophers – a philosophy being understood as a free-thinking reformist intellectual rather than a philosopher in the technical sense of a Leibniz or a Hume.

It is for this reason that Ayer is able to speak of Diderot and d'Alembert as Voltaire's "disciples", even though they had different ideas from his, and rather more original ones. Their thinking moved in channels which Voltaire had opened, and the same could be said of the other theorists of the time – Holbach, Helvétius, Condillac, Turgot, Condorcet, all rather

more sophisticated reasoners, and closer perhaps to Ayer himself in their forthright positivism and their religious scepticism, but basically *voltaireiens* to a man.

In an article he wrote on *gens de lettres* for Diderot's *Encyclopédie*, Voltaire recalled that in his youth society had been dominated exclusively by men of noble birth but that by the middle of the century they had been forced to share their dominance with men of letters. This was a transformation that Voltaire had accomplished almost alone by his eloquence and impudence and wit, and his often ruthless determination to make others believe what he believed; to become, as he put it once, a banner in order to avoid being used as an avvil.

Ayer's chapter entitled "Ecrasez l'Infame" gives us the best sense of the presence of a powerful champion of liberty. Other satirists might have mocked the Catholic Church in their writings as bitterly as Voltaire, but none did what he did for Calas, Sirven and other victims of religious persecution, employing investigators to establish the facts of their innocence, and then making their innocence known to all the world. If Voltaire was sometimes unscrupulous; if he made a considerable fortune by lending money at usurious rates of interest; he used the proceeds to help, and even house, the unfortunate, including refugees from Calvinist Geneva.

Ayer says of Voltaire that he "was not much of a political reformer". It is not easy to imagine what more could be expected of him. Are we to wish that he had been more like Montesquieu, who had more detailed suggestions for constitutional change and an altogether more Whiggish outlook? Ayer could fairly protest that there is little coherence between Voltaire's belief in enlightened absolutism and his plans for men's natural right to life, liberty and property. Readers may take comfort in the thought that it is the liberal Voltaire who has endured; he is remembered as *le défenseur des Calas*, the protagonist of freedom; his royalist died with him.

Caught in a mist-net

R. W. Ashford

MICHAEL BEEHLER, THANE K. PRATT and ALEX ZIMMERMAN
Birds of New Guinea
Oxford: Princeton University Press.
1986.
£28.00

For those with an interest in natural history, the birds of New Guinea are an essential part of the world's second largest island is also one of the most sparsely inhabited regions, the nature is still largely in control; you can often hear unbroken rain forest, rising through the moss-draped cloud forest to alpine meadows and snow-covered peaks. Long isolation has allowed many of the original inhabitants to indulge in an evolutionary ebullience of diversification resulting in more than 200 species of orchid, some 200 of rhododendron, more than 300 of endemic birds, and a estimated 700 languages among the three human inhabitants.

The bird-watching visitor is faced first with a difficulty of seeing the birds and second of identifying them. The mountain forest can be utterly still and silent for hours on end; a hawk, however, will catch perhaps ten birds a day and each will be a novelty. Until now there has been no satisfactory answer to the problem of identification. Austin L. Rand and E. Thomas Gilliard's *Handbook of New Guinea Birds* (1967) is out of date, out of print and almost unillustrated. Its second-hand price and the black market in photocopies testify to the lack of anything better. Subsequent books on New Guinea birds came in three rather over-priced coffee-table volumes,

often marketed as future collectors' items, of little practical use; serious scientific treatises which have contributed greatly to knowledge, but are of little use to the amateur, and anthropological studies describing the intimate involvement of birds in the lives of certain tribal groups. The older texts, many magnificently illustrated, are now priceless and only to be found in museums or such treasure troves as Lord Derby's library at Knowsley Hall.

Now the long-awaited field guide, *Birds of New Guinea*, has appeared and it is well worth having. Bruce M. Beehler, Thane K. Pratt and Dale A. Zimmerman have compiled a comprehensive account of the birds of New Guinea and the outlying islands belonging to both Papua New Guinea and Indonesia. Each species account covers the identification, distribution and, where possible, details of breeding and migrations. Particular emphasis is given to calls and song, so important in the identification of invisible species such as Shywhits and Jewel Babblers, or of groups of almost identical Mimic honeyeaters or Scrub Wrens. The illustrations are superb. In the best field-guide tradition each species is in the same pose; whole families are included together, but similar species from other families are repeated where appropriate. Two pages of kingfishers and four of doves are a feast for the eyes quite apart from their usefulness.

The book is introduced by a remarkably concise but informative description of the geography and ecology of New Guinea and there are a gazetteer and a section of practical advice for visitors.

My only complaints are that the value of my copy of Rand and Gilliard has been slashed and that my own observation, of a bumble House sparrow, has been ignored.

Patterns over wolds

John Dunn

JOHN MATHER
Birds of Yorkshire
Oxford: Oxford University Press.
1986.
£20.00

This comprehensive account of Yorkshire birds by T. H. Nelson, who, we are told, was kept with a string tied to his foot, and hanging out of the window so that when returning home at dawn could see him if, in jargon still fashionable among bird-watchers, there was "anything about". His pioneering avifauna of Yorkshire was much in need of revision when, in 1967, Ralph Chislett invested a lifetime's experience in *Yorkshire Birds*. John R. Mather's *Birds of Yorkshire* earns a place in the distinguished tradition in a thorough revision of the subject (and is readily comparable with its predecessors because it adheres to the county boundaries).

Many of the eighty-four additions to the list of birds since Chislett derive from the first two volumes of the *British Birds* in Britain in 1956 of Japanese mist-netting, which quickly became the foremost trapping technique, especially for small songbirds. It was the realization that concentrated searching from a strategic headland can detect hitherto overlooked species. Both techniques strongly bolstered the already impressive list of Spurn Peninsula Bird Observatory, which has become renowned for monitoring migrants from the Continent. These data presents to a vast increase in the frequency of records, building up patterns and knowledge, set against comparable data from the rest of Britain, Europe and beyond, and Mather's contribution well above the regional windows on a web of movement from Siberia to South Africa.

These advances in awareness, the book is a recognizable trait of its Victorian age, in its expansive reliance on the word (diagrams are mostly avoided in the text to the layman), due in no small part to the inclusion of Nelson's and Mather's outstanding diversity, and thus for the 404 species of birds re-

African airways

Christopher Perrins

EMIL K. URBAN, C. HILARY FRY and STUART KEITH (Editors)
The Birds of Africa
Volume Two
552pp. Academic Press. £65.
0121373029

When the first volume of *The Birds of Africa* appeared, the publishers of this impressive work expected to be able to cover the African avifauna in four volumes; now, it appears, the set will comprise six. Certainly, this seems a more realistic target.



This drawing of an immature Peregrine Falcon is from the *Raja Serfagee of Tanjore* collection of early nineteenth-century watercolour drawings in the British Library. It is reproduced from *Wonders of Creation: Natural history drawings in the British Library* by Ray Desmond (248pp. The British Library, £25. 07123 00716).

To readers already familiar with Volume One there will be few surprises, although small improvements have been made to the labelling of the plates. Volume Two covers five orders of birds: Galliformes (Game-birds), Gruiformes (Cranes, Rails, Bustards), Charadriiformes (Waders, Gulls, Terns and Auks), Pteroclidiformes (Sandgrouse) and Columbiformes (Pigeons and Doves), a total of some 300 species. Included in these groups are some of the most secretive and little-known species, the rails, and some of the better-known, such as the cranes. Coverage varies from about half a page for some of the vagrants and a few resident species about which little is known, such as the Pemba Green Pigeon, to rather over three pages for such better-known species as the

Wattled Plover.

Some 1,850 bird species have been recorded in Africa, about a fifth of the world total. Africa has an important, resident avifauna of its own; many of these species are endemic to Africa; and, during the northern winter, Africa plays host to some 40 per cent of the species of birds which breed in Europe and Asia. The late R. E. Moreau estimated that some 5,000 million birds left Europe and western Asia each year to spend the winter in Africa; of these about half die on the two journeys or during their stay in Africa. Among the main groups of these migrants covered in this volume are the waders, some of which, such as the Sanderling and Knot, breed in the high Arctic and winter mainly around the coasts, and the Ruff, which breeds a little further south and is a common winter visitor to inland marshes all over Africa.

One of the major groups covered in this volume is the game-birds. These include the guinea-fowl, which are important economically; the Helmeted Guineafowl was one of the first birds to be domesticated for eating and was widely introduced into many areas; later, the domestic chicken (from India) found greater favour and the Guineafowl was less widely kept. Another important group of African game-birds is the francolin (small, partridge-like birds) of which most of the forty-old species occur only in Africa. But perhaps the most exciting African game-bird is the Congo Peacock. This shy, forest-dwelling species was not described until 1936, although its discoverer, the famous ornithologist Chapin, had seen feathers from a large game-bird in native head-dresses for many years. That so large a bird could have remained undiscovered for so long caused a sensation, as did its obvious affinities with the Asian peacocks, which suggested an interesting historical link between the two areas.

Another species included in this volume is perhaps the world's most aberrant wader, the Crag Plover, whose nesting behaviour is more like that of a shearwater than a wader. It breeds in large colonies, laying a single, large, white egg at the end of a burrow in the sand. Although information is still scanty, it appears that the chick spends a long time in the burrow, again unlike other waders whose chicks run around freely within a few hours of hatching.

The thirty-two plates, by Martin Woodcock, deserve special mention. Four are diagrammatic, monochrome pictures of birds in flight (two of waders, one of gulls and one of terns). The remainder are in colour and are painted to a very high standard. Where necessary, there is usually more than one picture of each species (for example, where male and female, adult and juvenile or winter and summer plumage are different); there is also usually more than one for species where there are well-marked races. Ornithologists have come to expect a high quality of artwork in books of this sort; they will not be disappointed by these. Possession of the complete set will be a "must" for anyone seriously interested in the African avifauna.

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TLS Listings

A comprehensive weekly selection of new and forthcoming books received by the TLS

In response to many suggestions from readers and in the publishing and bookselling press, the TLS this week returns to its original practice of listing new and forthcoming books by subject and genre. We shall provide full publication information (including hardcover and paperback ISBNs and date of publication) about all the books we receive each week which seem to fall within the main interests of our readers. For practical reasons, the list must – at least at present – exclude children's books (already exceptionally fully covered in the twice-yearly special issues, as well as week by week), foreign-language books and paperback reprints of recent works. And we can only hope to mention a small number of those published on very popular subjects like cookery and sport. In the fields of literature and scholarship, though, the lists will be very full.

An entry will not, of course, mean that a book will necessarily be reviewed; and we regret that we cannot answer telephone enquiries or enter into correspondence about inclusions and exclusions. But we will welcome comments from readers about the usefulness of the TLS Listings, and how they might be improved.

Anthropology

Asher, Michael A Desert Dies (Oxford, 1986). Pp. 122. 0 70 81264 1. 3/10/86.
Bauman, Richard Story, Performance, and Event (Cambridge Studies in Oral and Literate Culture, 10) (Cambridge UP, 1986). Pp. 220. £34.50 (hardcover), £7.95 (paperback). 0 521 32223 3 (h.c.), 0 521 31111 X (pb). 2/11/86.

Archaeology

Silke, Anne (vol. 1), and Helge Ingstad (vol. 2) The Norse Discovery of America, 2 vols. (Oxford UP, 1986). Pp. 573pp. £75. 0 19 07562 1. 4/12/86.

Architecture

O'Gorman, James F., et al. Drawing Toward Building: Philadelphia architectural graphics 1732-1865 (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts/Pennsylvania UP, 1986). Pp. 142. £45.50 (h.c.), £13.50 (pb). 0 8126 06 9 (pb). 9/10/86.

Pound, Christopher Genius of Bath: The city and its landscape (Bath: Milcombe, 1986). Pp. 112. £7.50 (paperback). 0 90675 01 6. 1/10/86.

Art, including photography

Barr, Alfred H., Jr., edited by Irving Sandler and Amy Newman Defining Modern Art: Selected writings of Alfred H. Barr, Jr. (New York: Abrams, 1986). Pp. 327. \$20. 0 8109 0715 1. 3/10/86.

Baskin, Maurice, and Robert Dalrymple Ravilious and Wedgwood: The complete Wedgwood designs of Eric Ravilious (Dalrymple, 1986). Pp. 95. 0 9507301 6 5.

Black, Paul The Painted Chamber at Westminster Palace of Antiquaries, ed. by Thomas and Hudson. 160pp. Pp. 118 (paperback). 0 500 99044 1. 2/11/86.

Gray, Camilla, revised by Martin Ourslogh-Matley The Russian Experiment in Art 1893-1922, revised and enlarged edition (World of Art series) (London and Hudson, 1986). Pp. 324. £14.95 (paperback). 0 500 2807 9. 6/10/86.

Jenkins, David Fraser, and Derek Pullen The Lipnitz Gift: Models for sculpture (Tate Gallery, 1986). Pp. 65. 0 946590 50 7. 12/1/86.

Kalus, Ludvik Catalogue of Islamic Seals and Talismans, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1986). Pp. 140. £10. 0 19 952302 9. 2/11/86.

Leamore, Helen A Partial Testament: Essays on some moderns in the great tradition (Tate Gallery, 1986). Pp. 111. 0 946590 50 7. 12/1/86.

Lavey, Michael Giambattista Tiepolo: His life and art (Yale UP, 1986). Pp. 243. £45. 0 8126 06 9 (pb). 9/10/86.

Notion, Christopher, and David Park, editors. Clerical Art and Architecture in the British Isles (Cambridge UP, 1986). Pp. 250. £25. 0 521 32573 2. 2/11/86.

Bibliography

Bloomfield, Valerie Resources for Australian and New Zealand Studies: A guide to library holdings in the United Kingdom (Australian Studies Centre, University of London/British Library, 1986). Pp. 114. 0 7123 0122 4. 3/10/86.

Chen, David Linguistics in China: Bibliography of dictionaries and related literature (Linguistics Studies, 12) (Oxford UP, 1986). Pp. 273. £25. 0 521 32573 2. 2/11/86.

Cipriani, Paolo Black British Literature: An annotated bibliography (Oxford: Dangaroo Centre for Caribbean Studies, University of Warwick, 1986). Pp. 176. £7.95 (paperback). 0 8126 06 9 (pb). 9/10/86.

Jones, David A Bibliography and Reader's Guide to the First Editions of P. O. Wodehouse, 2nd edition (Oxford: Clarendon, 1986). Pp. 114. 0 19 952302 9. 2/11/86.

Biography, including letters and diaries

Bourne, Joan The Calculating Passion of Ada Byron (Hampden, CT: Archon, 1986). Pp. 321. \$20. 0 208 02119 1. 1/10/86.

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